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THE ENCHANTED UNIVERSE

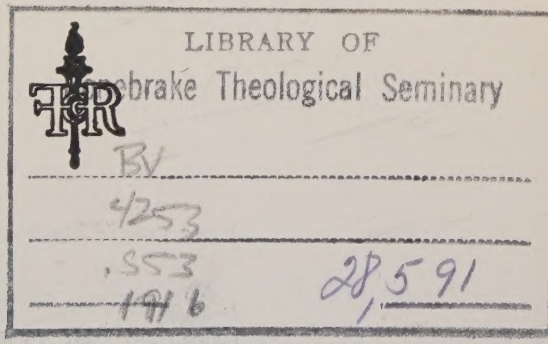
THE ENCHANTED UNIVERSE

The Enchanted Universe

AND OTHER SERMONS

BY

FREDERICK F. SHANNON
PASTOR OF THE REFORMED CHURCH-ON-THE-HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, N. Y.
Author of "The Soul's Atlas," "The New Personality," Etc.



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To

Mrs. Vicie Nighbert,

Whose
Strength of Mind,
Greatness of Heart,
And Nobility of Purpose,
Have Made
Her Life a Benediction,
This Volume
Is Gratefully Dedicated

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orm is not the only thing into whic
od can breathe the breath of life".
He mentioned 'money'.

I

THE ENCHANTED UNIVERSE*

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."—GEN. II:7.

A PROPHET of the soul declared that the universe, vast and broad and deep and high, is a handful of dust which God enchants. Man and his universe, the soul and its physical setting, is a subject which has commanded the supreme thinkers of the race. Toiling upon this problem, Kant asked four questions. First, has the world a beginning, and is there any limit of its extension in space? Second, is there a thinking self, an indivisible and indestructible unity, or does nothing exist but what is divisible and perishable? Third, am I free in my acts, or am I, like other beings, led by the hand of nature and of fate? Fourth, is there a Supreme Cause of the world, or do the objects of nature and their order form the last object which we can reach in all our speculation? For the solution of these problems, says

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Kant, the mathematician would gladly sacrifice the whole of his science, which cannot give him any satisfaction with regard to the highest and dearest aspirations of mankind.

It is evident, therefore, that my subject, while an old one, is always new. It is old in the sense that the text is one of the earliest expressions of man's double nature—a creature of dust and a child of divinity. It is agelessly new because man is abidingly interested in his own place and standing in the vast scheme of things. His position is set forth in the Bible not only with insistent and powerful emphasis, but with a grandeur that is not even approached in all the literature of the world. This particular passage is but one of many memorable expressions of man's enchanted universe, of his lower and higher relationships.

I

Man's relation to matter is thus stated in the first part of my text: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." And what is this dust of the ground, this dust of the stars, this dust of the material universe—this strange, illusive, unstitched, ever-fluttering garment of matter, in which Deity clothes Himself, out of which man leases his house of dust for a few brief summers and winters? Well, that is a difficult question indeed. Nobody has told us what matter is for the

very good reason that nobody knows. Matter is a kind of Sphinx, a sort of mental monster, challenging every philosophic passerby, every scientific question-monger, to guess its true character. The guessers have been many, from the earliest times until now, but the Sphinx, angered by their ignorance, has systematically slain them all. Thus far no Oedipus has happened along to reveal the secrets of the Sphinx of Matter. So mysterious, so unfathomable, is the problem, that thinkers are content to speak simply of the properties, or characteristics, of matter. That is all I propose doing at this juncture of my subject.

A well-known property of matter is that of position. Suppose you are on a trolley car going west at the rate of seven miles an hour. You rise in the car and walk due east exactly seven miles an hour also. Have you changed your position? Yes and no. So far as the car is concerned, you have unquestionably altered your position; so far as the earth is concerned, you have not shifted your position a hair's-breadth. Thus relativity is a big factor in thought, in life, in the universe. So matter, in the presence of the universe of spirit, has only a relative existence. This is the conclusion of all the great religions of the race.

Another characteristic of matter is motion. The physical universe, from the mightiest whirling fixed star to the minutest dancing electron, is on the move, going furiously, tremendously. Woe betide the

human passenger who complacently boards the solar train of planets and vows, in his conservative soul, that he will not budge an inch! Why, before he has had time to conceive the thought, the Great Engineer has already hurled him far onward into space. Simon Newcomb says that the greatest fact the human intellect has brought to light is this: Through all history our system has been rushing through space, at inconceivable speed, toward the constellation Lyra. Every second we are ten miles nearer that constellation, every day we are nearer it by a million miles. This has been going on since before the creation of man, and the astronomer thinks there is reason to believe that it will continue to our remotest posterity. But when our system has reached the position in space now occupied by Vega, the most brilliant star in the constellation Lyra, think you that we shall have overtaken our stellar quarry? By no means! They will have rushed onward into space just as far in advance of our panting, exhausted, pursuing solar system as they are at present. In view of the fact, then, that all matter, whatever it is, is in ceaseless motion, let me ask you this question: Has the house in which you live moved during the last ten years, or even in the past six months? Again—yes and no. With reference to the houses on either side of it, your house has not perceptibly moved; but just how far your house has moved with reference to the Earth, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, the Sun, and

the fixed stars, which are anything but "fixed," I would not dare to say. But I will venture this: If your house, in common with all matter—your physical body included—has not moved 365,000,000 miles in the last twelvemonth, and 72,000 miles in the last two hours—that is, within the time you left it, came to church, and reach home again—then Newton, Herschel, Newcomb, and a vast multitude of great minds, are terrible prevaricators and utterly unworthy of credence. Verily, this dust of the earth, with which the Almighty has magnificently walled you, is in constant and immeasurable motion!

Another property of matter is hardness. But the scientist knows that matter is only relatively hard. Here is, for example, some water, lard, iron, and steel. Is not water soft? Compared with lard, yes; but compared with many gases, water is exceedingly hard. But is not lard soft? Compared with iron, lard is soft; but compared with water, lard is hard. But, surely, iron is hard! Yes, indeed, until you put it alongside of steel, and then iron is measurably soft, for the engineer is habitually speaking of "soft iron." The disguises of matter, you see, are so many and varied as to be intellectually appalling. That is one reason, I take it, why no one is able to state precisely what matter is. All matter partakes of a kind of divine enchantment, and its so-called hardness is one of its enchanting characteristics.

A still further property of matter is solidity. We

speak of solid matter—a solid globe, or a solid rock. If we know what we mean, well and good. But when we talk to a trained physicist or philosopher about matter being "solid," we must needs be on our scientific guard. The best spectroscope, according to Professor Duncan, detects one-half of one millionth of a cubic centimeter of gas, but for determining minute particles of matter, the ultramicroscope is thirty-seven trillion thirty-one billion times more powerful than the spectroscope. Weaponed, therefore, with the spectroscope, the ultramicroscope, the spinthariscope, the electrometer, and a hundred other marvellous instruments, the scientist knows that solidity, as applied to matter, is a mere convenience of speech. Some time ago a friend sent me a load of wood. Not being an expert woodsman, much of that wood is still in our cellar. Once in awhile, urged by true Gladstonian fervour, I go down and chop or saw. Usually, I am easily convinced that my wood is both hard and solid. Consequently, before many sticks are severed, I am perfectly content to walk away and let the scientist argue on as to the solidity or non-solidity of matter. However, my conclusion does not alter the facts even slightly. The wood, of course, is composed of minute particles—molecules, atoms, electrons—and all are in such a whirling vortex that Descartes was led to undertake to explain even the formation of the universe itself by his theory of vortices. So the matter composing your body,

as well as the matter composing the billion-miled universe, is only relatively solid.

I will mention only one other characteristic of matter, but one of the most interesting of all, owing to the law of gravity. Matter has the very definite—and indefinite also—property of size. The unit may be the electron, infinitely small, or a star, incalculably large. But the consideration of size, in studying matter, influenced as it is by gravitation, cannot be overlooked. Here is a fountain pen. Suppose I want to increase its size or mass once again. How can it be done? In two ways: first, I may add just as much more fountain pen, doubling the size; second, without increasing the mass at all, I may make the fountain pen weigh just twice as much by doubling the size of the earth. I do not say that I am seriously thinking of undertaking the latter alternative; I only mean to say that scientists say this is one way of doing it. It is interesting to remember, in passing, that Newton did not employ the inductive method in making the greatest discovery of modern times. As thinkers, we believe in the inductive method—getting our facts, then our conclusions. But Newton, by intuition, or genius, or whatever you wish to call it, first got the idea of gravity and then assembled his facts in support of it. "As he foresees," says Carl Snyder, "that the calculations will verify his surmise, his hand trembles so that he must lay down his pen." It is one of the supremely romantic chapters in the

history of thought—or inspiration. Well, according to Newton and others, the force of gravity at the sun's surface is twenty-seven times greater than that of the earth. Let me assume, therefore, that you are a man—it would take a very courageous preacher to borrow this illustration with its inferences, from woman—and weigh 150 pounds. Now if you could be transferred to the surface of the sun, you would weigh 4050 pounds, and be literally crushed beneath your own weight. Is it not perfectly safe to take for granted, considering this enormous increase in weight, that no woman would like to take up her residence in the sun? That is why the illustration is strictly confined to the masculine gender.

These, then, are some of the characteristics of matter. The thing itself is not fully known. But we are justified in thinking that matter is the servant of mind or spirit. "The presence of mind," said Sir John Herschel, "is what solves the whole problem of the material universe." Certainly nothing less than mind can solve the mystery, and nothing less than mind can give a satisfactory reason for the existence of the worlds of matter at all. These immeasurable physical fields must be for the exercise of spirit. Mind has gone into their making; they are built on mathematical laws and baptized with intelligence from thickest crust to thinnest vapour; and, therefore, mind is looking out of their every atom and star. The universe is just a vast

autograph album. Its covers are wrought of matter bound up in myriads of forms; its pages are molecules and constellations, planets and electrons, mountains and motes; and God has written His signature upon every single page, whether gigantically large or microscopically small.

II

The latter half of my text distinctly states man's relation to spirit: "And the Lord God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Physically speaking, a human being is fearfully and wonderfully made. But the physical existence borrows its meaning from the spiritual; man is a creature of inconceivable affiliations; he breaks bounds, exhausts the categories of time and sense, thrusts the roots of his nature deep into the soil of eternity, and, weeping over his weakness and imperfection, rejoices with joy unspeakable that he is the child of God and the heir of imperishable glory. In his transfigured moods, man is vividly and profoundly conscious of his celestial backgrounds. Like the psalmist, he then crushes the external universe to a handful of dust within his strong spiritual grasp, and declares: "Whom have I in Heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee."

But there are those who deny man's august kinship to the overarching, soliciting, intelligent and

intelligible realm of the spiritual. I find some of these atheists in hiding in my own house of dust. They are those clever traitors named my five senses. While here on earth I cannot get on without them, because they are the nervous wires by which I communicate with the outer world, by which the outer world communicates with me. I call them my Court Fools. They have their essential place in my court of life; but like all infidels, they assume entirely too much. For the moment, therefore, I am going to put some of these couriers of sensation on the witness stand.

First of all, I introduce Mr. Touch. Before he leaves the stand, he will have earned the reputation of being one of the biggest dunces infesting my entire realm. "What is your business, Mr. Touch?" I ask. "I am in most intimate relations with your brain, sir," he replies, somewhat haughtily. "I am an expert telegrapher, and my business is to keep you informed as to your dealings with matter and space. For example, I send a telegram to your brain which reads: 'The space with which you are in contact is occupied by matter; and the substance is either hard or soft in comparison to your body.'" "You are a very good servant, Mr. Touch," "Indeed I am, sir, and very smart, too." "How much do you know?" "Everything there is to be known in the physical universe, sir." "Be careful, Mr. Touch, or you'll perjure yourself." "I'm not afraid; I can touch

all there is, seen and unseen." "Are you sure?" "Absolutely sure!" "You know, Mr. Touch, that it takes, chemically speaking, two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen to make a molecule of water. Suppose you multiply your atoms of hydrogen and oxygen until you have several molecules of water. Now, let me ask you, Mr. Touch, if you have ever placed your hand upon the gigantic forces at work between molecule and molecule?" "Well, I can't say that I have." "You know that the chemist has been wrestling with that problem a long time, do you not?" "And what does he think?" "Just this: That if the atomic and molecular forces contained in a single drop of water were suddenly liberated, the resulting energy would wreck the world, destroying every mountain, every sea, every nation, every city, every human, every animal, every small and large thing on the planet."

Thus my court fool named Touch tells me little or nothing about atomic or molecular forces. They are not among the familiar forces—these unimaginably subtle, these inconceivably powerful forces; they belong to a different order. We are utterly unaware of them—not because they do not exist, not because they are not in ceaseless operation, but solely because they are so perfectly balanced, held in such noiseless, frictionless equilibrium by the all-wise God who conceived and created them.

My next court fool—one of the jesters who go

along to make merriment for the king—is Hearing. "What is your business, Mr. Hearing?" "My business is to report to you all the sound there is in the universe." "Now be careful, Mr. Hearing: your brother Touch has already convicted himself of perjury." "Oh, but Touch is just a stupid fellow compared with me. Why, look at my wonderful instrument—just see this ear of mine! Those shells down on the shore, which hold the whispered murmur of the sea, have all been patterned after my external and internal ear. Would you like me to tell you how sound reaches my brain through this ear? Very well. After entering my outer ear, sound waves pass inwards, reaching the membrane stretched over my inner ear. That is what I call the drum, because sound smites it and it trembles. The message is taken from this drum by those marvellous little bones called, because of their grotesque shapes, the hammer, the anvil, and the stirrup. Then the stirrup, agitated by this news from the outer court of things, knocks at a little window and is hospitably received. But the sound is in a hurry to reach my brain, and so it is taken from this mysterious window by a tiny pool of water, just beyond it. And then comes that most bewildering of all the factors of the ear—that little musical instrument with its scores of delicate strings made of nerves so fine and tenuous that it requires a microscope to see them. Waves from that microscopic pool of water are the elflike fingers that play the many-stringed instru-

ment. At this point the nerves, quivering with news from time and eternity, take up the message and flash it on to the brain." "A wonderful instrument, surely, Mr. Hearing. We must all concede that. But you made one statement I must inquire into a little more closely. Did you not say that you hear everything there is to be heard?" "I certainly did!" "Well, now, is it not a fact, Mr. Hearing, that up to the sixteenth vibration of sound-waves per second you do not hear anything at all?" Mr. Hearing's frown betrays an ugly mood. "That's what these fool scientists say," he roars. "Never mind about the scientists, whether they be wise or foolish," commands the Court. "Answer the gentleman's question." So examination of the witness proceeds: "You know, Mr. Hearing, that 256 vibrations per second produce what musicians call the Middle C note on the piano; you know, also, that up to the nine thousandth vibration per second —or the twenty-four thousandth at the most—the ear still registers sound; now what I want to ask you, Mr. Hearing, is this: Do you, or any other mortal, know anything of the sound that goes on beyond the twenty-four thousandth sound-wave per second?" "For myself, I do not; and as for any other mortal, I dare not answer." "You have at last begun to tell the truth. Stand aside, Mr. Hearing." It is well to remember, in this connection, that Huxley held if our ears were keen enough we should be able to hear the flowers grow; while

George Eliot thought we should then die of the roar on the other side of the silence.

But the star witness for materialism must now be introduced. His name is Sight. Of all the senses, sight is supreme; and his instrument, the eye, has not a superior beneath this dome of skull and brain. Small, as compared with some of the other faculties, yet the eye, by reason of the quality, delicacy, and painstaking thought which has gone into its construction, reigns with a kind of undisputed kingliness over all of man's bodily powers. A man undertook to lower Wellington in the estimation of a private soldier because of his small stature. The soldier replied: "Wellington was biggest at the top." Similarly, if the hand or foot undertakes to bully the eye because of its small dimensions, the eye may answer: "I am biggest at the top. I am not only located near the brain, the centre of things, but I am the scout that runs everywhither, searching out both landscape and skyscape, that I may render a faithful report to my master, the mind."

But just because Sight has such a surpassing instrument, it may be conceited, vain, dogmatic, and, therefore, easily deceived. Some of the most gifted mortals are the tools of a vanity that would make a peacock forget to strut. But let the witness speak for himself. "Mr. Sight, you know Hearing and Touch, do you not?" "Well, I can't say that I know them very well; I have heard of them, but

the fact is, they are such dull, inferior creatures that I don't like to associate with them. To be perfectly frank, they are not in my social set." "Oh, I see. You are an aristocrat, then?" "Yes; that's how I feel, whether true, or false." "What is your particular function, Mr. Sight?" "Why, to see, of course—to see everything—everything—mark you—there is to be seen." "Is not that a rather bold assertion, Mr. Sight?" "It might be for a lesser authority, but not for me. I am so absolutely sure of myself that it is impossible for me to be mistaken. You may recall that somebody said of Clerk-Maxwell that it was impossible for him to be mistaken in matters of physical science. I am the Clerk-Maxwell of the five senses." "But, Mr. Sight, another great scientist said: 'Show me the scientist who never made a mistake, and I will show you a scientist who never made a discovery.' Yet that is only an aside. What I want to ask you, inasmuch as you claim to see everything, is this: Did you ever see any Thought? Did you ever see any Love? Did you ever see any Hope? Did you ever see any Faith? Did you ever see any Prayer?" Well —I—or—if—and——" "Hold on: answer my question—yes or no." "No." "Then you cannot see everything there is, can you?" "No." "Now, forgetting these higher matters for a moment, and coming back to physical things, is it not a fact, Mr. Sight, that up to 458 billion vibrations per second, you can't see anything at all? And is it

not also true that light-waves have to beat in upon your eye at the rate of 727 billion vibrations per second before you see the ultra violet? Therefore, are you prepared to say what goes on beyond—on the other side of—the vibrations which produce the ultra violet?" "I am not—today!" "Then stand aside, please."

Evidently, the senses are not competent witnesses in this case. Unquestionably they may be trained until the spiritualized mind commands them to serve its interests; or they may be perverted until the degeneracy of the soul itself spreads over and through them, befouling the very windows whereby man sees the outer world. But, in either case, they are necessarily limited. My senses cannot inform me of countless physical operations going ceaselessly on, to say nothing of those spiritual realities which report themselves to the Christ-hidden spirit alone. Fortunately, I have some spiritual statesmen—expert witnesses—in my court of life. Their testimony, bearing upon man's relation to the World of Spirit—I mean the Personal, Holy, Wise, Loving Spirit of God in Christ Jesus—is at once commandingly authoritative, infinitely satisfying, and richly redemptive from sense and sin.

One of my statesmen is Prayer. He assures me that I may talk with that Eternal Somebody who is not so far as to be near. When we—a thousand or so of us—were talking from the First Reformed

Church of Brooklyn to San Francisco a few months ago, some of us were amazed at the instant replies which came from the other side of the continent and the cities between. "Hello!" called Mr. Robb. Instantly the answer flashed back: "This is Pittsburgh, or Chicago, or Omaha, or Denver, or Salt Lake City, or San Francisco, Mr. Robb." It is the miracle of man's mastery over matter and space; but every action of the human free-will, said Lord Kelvin, is a miracle to physical and chemical and mathematical science. And Kelvin, remember, represents the highest type of physicist, combining his great mathematical powers with the inventive genius and practical skill of the experimentalist. But his glory is this: He was a man of prayer, a humble, a devout disciple of Christ, who refused to be saddled by the physical elements and ridden to a spiritual boneyard. Well, how long does it take the human voice, flying on electric wings, careering over mountains, rivers, lakes, and prairies, to reach San Francisco? The time is actually so short that it can hardly be measured—the sixteenth of a second! That is wonderful; but my statesman named Prayer does something more wonderful still. Here it is: "Before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." After hearing me quote that passage in this sermon, Mr. Robb said: "Mr. Shannon, I will have to tell the President of the New York Telephone Company that, notwithstanding our wonderful triumphs, we

are yet behind the times. We can answer while they are yet speaking, but we cannot hear before they call."

Another statesman is Faith. Arnold Ure has written an excellent definition of faith. After speaking of the fact that both science and philosophy may and do err, he says: "Religion demands faith; and faith would seem to be that inborn necessity which has ever compelled the human race to aspire to higher ideals and to higher beliefs than can be afforded, either by the proofs of science, or the reasoning of philosophy." Faith, then, is an inborn necessity of the soul. When the babbling idiots of Touch, Hearing, and Sight deny, Faith triumphantly affirms—affirms with the conviction of a pioneer cutting his way through a tangled forest, convinced that light and the open country are on the other side. But Faith is not only a pioneer, a herald, a John the Baptist of the Soul, announcing the presence of the Invisible King,—Faith is essentially creative. Faith brings to nought the things that seem that it may manifest the things that are. Faith is the soul's creative genius. In wireless telegraphy, we see man controlling, actually creating and collecting vibrations of which his senses are entirely ignorant. And how does he do it? By means of instruments which he himself has invented. Who would dare to hint that man has reached the limit of his inventive powers? The time may come—probably not in your day nor

mine—when, as the late Stephen Phillips sang, "the delusion of death shall pass." Will man ever, through electric or ether eyes, stand upon the shores of the Hudson and see his friend on the banks of the Thames? Who knows? Surely, the day is not far distant when a single man, by pressing an electric button, will destroy navies and armies, making war, as we now know it, utterly impossible. Maurice Maeterlinck thinks that, within a century, man will be able to steer his planet through space. It is a rather daring conjecture. Meantime, until man has learned to kick militaristic kaiserism off the planet, it will matter little which way he steers it, for his planet will hardly be worth steering at all. Man has already partially harnessed the energy of Niagara. Is it too much to prophesy that some day man will harness the energy thrown off by the earth, as it flies through space? At any rate, man has an unconquerable faith in himself which will go steadily on conquering physical obstacles. But faith in himself is not enough, man must have an increasingly deepening, growing, all-inclusive faith in that Other, Higher, and Eternal Self, even the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Exercising that faith, neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation—nothing within the visible, the invisible, or the as yet uncreated—shall be able to separate him from the love

of God, which is infinitely broader than the measure of man's mind.

Here, then, is the barest hint of Man's Enchanted Universe. It is as old as the Book of Genesis, as new as the Book of Life. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

II

THE UNTROUBLED HEART

"Let not your heart be troubled."—St. John xiv: 1.

HORACE BUSHNELL, just before he died, speaking of these words, exclaimed: "What soft and sweet infolding of all highest things." Right soft and sweet they are, wondrously infolding, and highest in the ultimate heights. Once, at least, the human dream, the ageless longing, got itself expressed in fitting words. But words alone could not suffice; words may be but breath blown into blossoms of fragrant sound; they may be beautiful without being ministers of grace. But here, in this Upper Room, the spiritual cathedral of humanity, final words are wedded to final life, final truth, final reality. It was in a troubled atmosphere, instinct with troubled souls, overwhelmed by approaching disaster and infelt dismay, that the Master spoke out His music of holy calm, stilled the foam-flecked waves of that apostolic, and very human sea. And we need to hear these words again for the same reason that these men heard them first. For are we not in a world of sin, of discord, of mystery, of trouble?

Yet we may have peace in the midst of trouble, light in the heart of mystery, calm in the centre of confusion. Ours may be the way of the untroubled heart. What is its source? What is its method? And what is its goal?

I

The first essential of the untroubled heart is faith in a Christlike God. "Believe in God," said the Master; and then, in answer to Philip's plea to show him the Father, Jesus sets forth the kind of God he is to believe in. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The kind of Deity we worship is a matter of supreme importance. Men and nations disclose their God in their own characters. Is God worshiped as immeasurable force? Then brute force becomes dominant in the worshipers. Is God considered an infinite brain? Then intellect has the ascendency. Is God thought of as omnipotent will? Then will is uppermost in those who thus think of the Almighty. So one might go through the nations of the past and present and read their God by their character. The same is true, also, of individuals. Now, because of this fact, we cannot be too careful of our views of God. While right views alone cannot save us, they may enable us more vividly to appreciate the Saviour who can.

Who, then, is this glorious Being, trust in Whom

gives to men an untroubled heart in the midst of an exceedingly trouble-rent world? He is the Christlike God—"the Personal Spirit, perfectly good, who in holy love creates, sustains, and orders all." This definition, given by the late Newton Clarke, is at once sublimely simple and splendidly comprehensive. For it contains, according to his own analysis, four statements concerning the God of Christ. First, the Nature of God: He is the Personal Spirit. This means that God thinks, feels, wills. Your limited consciousness is prophetic of God's limitless consciousness; that which is a broken gleam in you is a fountain of unemptying splendour in Him; your tiny spark of being is flung out from that God who is a vast, golden sun. Furthermore, God is personal as contrasted with vagueness, dimness, elusiveness. "A personal spirit is a self-conscious and self-directing intelligence; and a personal God is a God who knows Himself as Himself, and consciously directs His own action." Second, the Character of God; He is perfectly good. He is more than kind and gracious; He is the utmost of moral excellence; all love, wisdom, goodness, and power are gathered up and sheaved in Him. A perfectly good God is the crowning glory of Christ's revelation. We do not get this conception from the universe. Indeed, many hold that the cosmos is stoutly opposed to the idea that God is good. They point to the red-in-tooth-and-claw tendency in nature and say: "Is this your soul of

goodness in things evil?" Yet however much or little the physical universe may reveal it, there is no doubt that God's perfect goodness is made manifest in His Son. Therefore, while men may find God in nature, it is absolutely certain that God does find men in Christ. Third, the relation of God to other existence: He creates, sustains, and orders all. All worlds and all systems; all angels and all men were created by Him; all are sustained by Him; all are governed by Him. "Of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things." The Christ-like God is the beginning, the path, the goal of all that was, of all that is, of all that shall be. Fourth, the motive of God in His relation to other existence: God is Holy Love. This is implied in perfect goodness; but God's holy love is so uniquely the revelation of our Lord that it demands special emphasis. Why was the universe created? What is the motive behind it all? Holy love is the answer. For example: God did not create our race because eternity went heavy on His hands and He was in need of something to do. He created us that He might lavish His love upon us, thus rendering us capable of loving Him and all men. Christ is God's explanation of the universe. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him, should not perish, but have eternal life." It is God's holy love in Christ that is conducting the world toward the goal of ultimate redemption.

Faith in such a God, then, is the secret, and the only secret, of the untroubled heart. Surely, this is the faith we need; the faith we must have, or ingloriously perish in all worthful spiritual endeavour. Among other things, this faith will save you from being victimized by the new dogmatism abroad today. We have already been warned against the new predestination. Obsessed by popular ideas of heredity, men easily become moral shirks. Standing by ancestral graves, they backbonelessly lament: "Dead sires, it was all your fault and not mine!" And this scientific fatalism, as taught by the materialistic school of eugenists, eats the vitals of morality like gangrene. The old iron-clad predestination, as compared with this mechanical fatalism, is as soft as a June zephyr sighing in the wake of a tornado. And just now the new predestination has its counterpart in the new dogmatism. The chief characteristic of the new dogmatism is the insistence with which it asserts what the modern man thinks about God, about himself, about society, about destiny. Now we must know what a man thinks in order to know what a man is; and this modern man thinks aloud so much that it were impossible to ignore him. He should not be ignored; he is of vast importance. And yet there is something more important still. It is this: To know what the supreme mind—the mind of the Christlike God—thinks of the modern man. Are we not in real danger of overlooking this phase of the problem? Many seem to think of the

Creator as Comte thought of the laws of the solar system. He said: "We can easily conceive them improved in certain respects." But for some reason, the Almighty did not see fit to let the contract for improving the solar system to the positivist. It is nothing less than tragical to see men extending their intellectual frontiers while at the same time contracting their spiritual boundaries. "How profoundly true it is," said James Martineau, "that in divine things the child may know what the great philosopher has missed." Speaking of a godless civilization, he also says: "It is a fatal delusion to imagine that the arts of life, which only enlarge its resources, have any necessary tendency to improve its spirit; or that the completest acquaintance with science affords any guarantee of highest goodness. No laboratory can neutralize the poison of the passions, or find a crucible to make the nucleus of the heart flown down; no observatory can show us a new constellation of the virtues, correct the aberration of life's true light, or deepen any heavens but those of space."

All reasonable men are in hearty sympathy with what George Meredith called rational progress. It is the blasé Comteism; the intellectual conceit unaware of the rattle of its dry bones; the new dogmatism more repulsive than the old, bereft of thoroughgoing morality and orphaned of spiritual vitality; the smiling ease with which old faiths are chucklingly thrown off and new ones grimacingly

taken on; the superficial mental illumination that lacks the urge and ache of sacrificial passion; the fad to be glibly modern rather than the desire to be eternally right—these are a few expressions of that reckless spirit which chants for its marching song:

> "Oh, we have learnt to peer and pore
> On tortured puzzles from our youth.
> We know all labyrinthine lore,
> We are the three Wise Men of yore,
> And we know all things but the truth."

Consequently, a just critique of large sections of current life is this: Our humanitarianism is not robustly moral; our morality is not deeply spiritual; and our spirituality is not vitally Christian. Therefore, we need to be delivered from the peril—ghastly smooth and tremendously insinuating—of a "Christless Christianity." Having a form of godliness and practically denying its power is equivalent to having a painted fire and freezing to death. So long as we ministers prophesy soft things we shall be rewarded with a harvest of soft souls. Our up-to-date cleverness is a sorry substitute for the dateless reality of sustained repentance and eternal life mediated by the unaging Christ. Where there is no trenchant, rapier-like thrust in the pulpit, there is no bleeding, sin-convicted heart in the pew; and both alike stumble into the abyss of unchristian inefficiency.

II

The second essential of the untroubled heart is Christlike sonship. For the only way to faith in a Christlike God is faith in Christ. "Believe in God, believe also in me." Here is our Lord's unique sonship, together with the sonship He imparts.

There is a twofold witness to Christ's solitary relation to God—the New Testament and the history of two thousand years. In the greatest of all books we come upon such expressions as these: "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him;" "Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" "That ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (he saith unto the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house;" "Behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from

on high;" "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;" "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me." Reading such words, with such a Being behind them, one is not profoundly impressed with the statement that "the Church of the future will reverence more and more the personality of Jesus." Of course, it will do that; but my point is: If Jesus was no more than the supreme religious teacher, and the introducer of the highest ethical principles, then, in the light of His claims, He is frankly and emphatically not entitled to reverence at all. For His teaching and ethical principles, compared with His office of Saviour, Revealer of God, Conqueror of the Grave, and Guide of the Race, would stamp Him the arch-imposter of history, were He simply a teacher and not the Redeemer of the world. The Christ of God is not Another, if you please, He is the Only; not just timely, but timeless; not merely the high-water mark of ethics, but the veritable water of life to souls thirsty enough to drink; not simply a unique religious genius, but the only Saviour in time and eternity from the guilt and power of sin.

Unique in Himself, Christ imparts His sonship to others. "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become

children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The witness which the human consciousness bears to Christ is a fact of the utmost spiritual grandeur. Since Pentecost, there have been multitudes in every age and clime who have known Christ better than they knew father, mother, brother, sister, or friend. It is even so today. Millions upon millions can say with the apostle: "I know Him; and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." He is the living bread upon which they feed. He is the true vine of which they are unwithering branches. He is the well of water springing up unto eternal life in their spirits. He is the Good Shepherd who leads them into green pastures of love and by tuneful streams of quietness. He is the door, and those who enter in say: "Nothing seems closed to me, because I, too, have become the door of everything." He is the Ancient of Days, the I am that I am, who forgives, who heals, who redeems, who crowns, who satisfies. He brings a sense of "stilled singing" into hearts that trust Him, while He wakens unutterable silences in souls that love Him. Goethe spoke of the beginning of his friendship with Schiller as a "new life," a "second youth." "He saved me from the charnel-house of science," he says, "and gave me back to poetry and life." But if one human can touch another in such a grandly vitaliz-

ing way, how much more does the Christ of God release men and women from the charnel-house of existence into spaciousness of life and reality! With His great, tender hand of Hope He wipes away all tears, even as He thrills the soul with incommunicable news from eternity, giving such lofty perspective that one is constrained to say:

"When I consider life and its few years—
A wisp of fog betwixt us and the sun;
A call to battle, and the battle done
Ere the last echo dies within our ears;
A rose choked in the grass; an hour of fears;
The gusts that past a darkening shore do beat;
The burst of music down an unlistening street—
I wonder at the idleness of tears.
Ye old, old dead, and ye of yesternight,
Chieftains, and bards, and keepers of the sheep,
By every cup of sorrow that you had,
Loose me from tears, and make me see aright
How each hath back what once he stayed to weep:
Homer his sight, David his little lad."

III

Fatherhood and sonship presuppose the third essential of the untroubled heart—the Christlike home. "In my Father's house are many mansions." Men live greatly just so far as they do the business of life upon capital borrowed from Heaven. Otherwise, they lead a piecemeal existence. Indeed, the one-world-at-a-time character properly has no world at all. For him the higher unity of being drops to the level of dead uniformity. Thus he ultimately

finds this world a bore, while the world invisible is no more substantial than a fog-bank. Both worlds elude the man who insists upon having only one world, because both are required to give unity, richness, and meaning to either. At least three ideas are prominent in the Master's discourse upon humanity's celestial gathering-place.

There is, first of all, the note of lofty assurance. "If it were not so, I would have told you." It is well enough for philosophers to give us their speculations; that is their high calling. Yet a raft of reason—a boat whose bottom is wrought of intuition, whose prow is alight with instinct, whose rudder is the plaything of shifting winds of temperament, whose pilot is not sure of the unknown deeps ahead—such a craft is not altogether inviting when the importance of the journey is duly considered. On the contrary, men go aboard the White Ship of Revelation with buoyant stride and steadfast confidence. Athens and Jerusalem beheld the universe out of strikingly different eyes. "To affirm positively," said Socrates, "that these things are exactly as I have described them, does not become a man of discernment." No; not a man of discernment only; not a mere philosopher, however noble. But in old Jerusalem, in a little upper room, was One wiser than all academies, gentler than all mothering breasts, kindlier than the velvet touch of all skilled hands, stronger than the combined strength of sin, death, and the grave. He spoke

positively of Yonderland, and was it not divinely becoming in Him who was before all things, and in Whom all things hold together? A weary old mother, at the end of a hard day's toil, said to her son: "Well, I am one day nearer my grave." "No, mother," the son quickly answered, "you are just one day nearer home: *we are Christians.*" Oh, let us not forget that, my friends. If we are indeed Christians, ours is the privilege of a brave, unearthly assurance; for the universe is not talking in its sleep as we listen to the speech of the untroubled heart. When a soul is indwelt by Christ, man is no more afraid of death than a child is afraid of its mother's kiss.

The second idea is spaciousness. "In my Father's house are *many mansions.*" Heaven is the Land of Room Enough. There is room for all the dumb generations of the tongueless past; for all who have nobly striven and heroically failed; for all who have daringly dreamed and had not time here to witness their dreams' fulfillment; for all who entered the world with a hopeless handicap and left it with strong crying and tears. One thing—and one thing only—can shut out a soul from the spiritual capaciousness of the everlasting abiding-places. It is an impure heart, an unholy will—love of what God hates, and hate of what God loves. "Nothing in the world," said Kant, "or even outside of the world, can possibly be regarded as good without limitation except a good will." Here men

are jostled and crowded—crowded for time; crowded for health; crowded for wisdom; crowded in multitudinous ways. And this is true of the good who desire to become better; true of the better who yearn to attain the best. But the time is short; our noisy days speed on wings of laughter and sighing; we spend our years as a tale that is told. Always it is the amplest nature that most poignantly feels the brevity of life. A Moses, with his promised land still untrodden; a Paul, with his world-programme still unrealized; a John, with his city of pearl and jasper still far away in the ethereal distance; a Dante, with his haunting vision still uncaught in poetic colours; a Shakespeare, with his immortal music still slumbering in the unplumbed deeps of his mighty soul; a Phillips Brooks, in the height of his powers, who still feels that he might come to something, if only he had five hundred years in which to pray and think and work. It is the thousand-souled man, far more than the one talent grave-digger, to whom the spaciousness of the Father's many-roomed Home appeals like melodious trumpet-blasts quivering with violent thrills of life. "Here," said Origen, "we see with eyes, act with hands, walk with feet. But in that spiritual body we shall be all sight, all hearing, all activity."

The Master's final idea is the immortal society. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself. That

where I am, there ye may be also." If, as Beecher once said, "the bosom of God is the food of the universe," then the purpose of the universe is to grow a true and lofty society of chaste souls. Men are the end of nature, but men are not the end of themselves. Leaving nature behind, men go endlessly on and ceaselessly up—on and up the shining hills of light. First that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual—the dawn of the eternal, the call of the celestial, the ache and thrill of the personal, the peace and poise of the Christocentric. "I know mine own, and mine own know me," says the all-knowing Christ. What is it but the downbending of divinity and the upreaching of humanity, until the twain become one new and redeemed society in that Holy City paved with myriad rolling stars and washed by silver-singing seas? Then why should we not lean listeningly upward as we go thither? It is the starward look that gives majesty to the earthward step. Have we not left behind the burning mount, with its blackness, and darkness, and tempest? And are we not now pilgrims of grace, facing toward Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels, and the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant? All that ever lived are living still! It is a sublime, solemn, heart-shattering thought!

Consider it—ah! consider it well in your waking thoughts and tasks, and sometimes its voiceless wonder will lovingly invade your dreams! "All that lives must die, passing through nature to eternity," said Shakespeare; yet it is equally true that all that die must live, passing out of the flesh into the world of spirits. What heavens and what hells there are in that immeasurable Milky Way of Deathless Souls! Once, at the end of a Sabbath whose hours were heavy with rain and storm, Doctor Hillis and I were talking of the "wonderful dead who have escaped from their bodies and gone." Raphael was one; Rembrandt was another; then Brooks, then Beecher, and, last of all, Robertson of Brighton. We were still talking, even as I passed out of his door into the night. Suddenly he paused, looked out and up, and asked: "What are they all doing tonight? What are they thinking about? Do Sundays mean anything to them?" It was a moment not to be forgotten—one in which silence is golden speech. Yet there is a deep, divine answer to my friend's great questions. It is this: "And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve Him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

This, then, is the way of The Untroubled Heart—faith in the Christlike God, faith in the Christlike Sonship, faith in the Christlike Society. And this is the rhyme of the Christian Mariner:

"I have a faith that life and death are one,
That each depends upon the self-same thread,
And that the seen and unseen rivers run
To one calm sea, from one clear fountain-head.
I have a faith that man's most potent mind
May cross the willow-shaded stream, nor sink;
I have a faith, when he has left behind
The earthly vesture on the river's brink,
When all his little fears are torn away,
His soul may beat a pathway through the tide,
And, disencumbered of its inward clay,
Emerge, immortal, on the summer side."

III

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

"Again, therefore, Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world."—St. John viii:12.

YET many are saying: "The Light of the World is the light that failed." Thinking of the bloody rain in Europe and Asia, they exclaim: "The Sun has suffered total eclipse: it is not light, but the mailed fist, that triumphs; it is not the Lamb, but the Lion, that conquers; it is not Christ, but Cæsar, that is on the throne." But such expressions are the mere noise of brains in the throes of thought-friction. Chiefest of the lessons we may learn in this school of international agony is this: Civilization is not a synonym for Christianity. Some have confidently assumed their identity, but the brute is now busily gnawing and clawing that assumption to pieces. No, my friend, Christianity has not failed; it is your efficient, clever, cruel, Christless civilization that has failed, is failing, and must fail, hour by hour. Tomorrow it will utterly fade, and over its heap of charred ruins, bleaching bones, unmarked graves, broken bodies, and accusing hands of mothers and little children, the Light of the World will arise afresh with heal-

ing in His wings. When our Christless culture, which is a very thin veneer for the blackest barbarism, has been stripped off; when our fragile might and fictitious power have been triumphantly slain by the Spirit of the Lord; when our ambition to reign has been supplanted by our passion to serve; when kings and emperors have had this final bloody breathing spell before laying their crowns and swords and guns at the feet of Christ, then shall we discover newer, deeper, richer meanings in the life and ministry of Him who borrowed the centre of the solar system to interpret His nature and character: "I am the light of the world."

I

One of the primary facts concerning the sun is its creative power. Go where you will, the fertilizing wonder of light confronts you. Look at the sky above you, at the earth beneath you, or search the deeps under the earth, and you are ever in the presence of light's begetting power. The coal miner brings his black diamonds from the bowels of our planet. Yet is he not simply uncovering huge layers of stored-up sunshine? The immense coal fields of China, of America, of the world, are nothing more nor less than condensed sunlight. Untold ages ago God filled our world-cellar with coal, and every lump taken out of it is a clot of the sun's blood turned black. In spring earth's face is wreathed

with a measureless smile of greenery. One spring is a miracle too great to be told; but when you think of all the springs that have been, with their illimitable patches of colour, their throb of pregnant power, their whir of wings, and their wafture of fragrance, how can you recount the sun's generative capacity? Why, every little brown seed that has wakened to life in the long, long history of the world; every sprig of grass that has climbed out of its tiny grave and become an emerald string for the south wind to finger a resurrection melody on; every tree that has thrown out its branches as so many begging hands to be filled with treasure from the atmosphere; all the animal life that has come and gone, all the animal life that is, and is to be—all represent the bloody sweat and aching agony of the sun. Scholars say that if the sun were suddenly blotted out, there would not be a sign of vegetable and animal life on this globe at the end of seventy-two hours. This floating ocean in the air above us would come down in blinding snowdrifts; rivers, lakes, and seas would turn to solid ice; the temperature of the whole atmosphere would drop 260 degrees below the freezing-point. Life would be utterly impossible. Indeed, Tyndall was so profoundly impressed by the creativeness of light that he said all our philosophy, all our art, all our poetry, all our science, Plato, Shakespeare, Raphael, and Newton—all are potential in the forces of the sun. This, of course, is materialism gone

to seed, if it ever needs to go. The sun, under God's directive mind, helps to build the body in which a Raphael or a Newton lives for a few years; but the undying Newton, the immortal Raphael, neither of these imperial spirits, nor the lowliest human that ever dwelt in a house of clay, pays homage to sun or star. They get their being from behind the veils of force and sense. God breathed His very Self into them and sent them out from the golden homelands of the soul to pioneer among the wilds of sense and time. For a few years they wrought in the fields of the human, then shook themselves free of their enveloping dust, and returned to that God who ever lives and loves, covering Himself with light as with a garment.

Now, as the sun creates all physical life, our Lord creates all spiritual life. "I am the bread of life" —He is the soul's nourishment; "I am the water of life"—He is the soul's perpetual cleanser; "I am the light of life"—He is the soul's illuminator; "I am the light of the world"—He is humanity's germinating power. Thus does Christ's spiritually creative sway suggest the far-off birth of things. "In the beginning—God." God was old, the Ancient of Days, when the heavens and earth felt the first stir of life in the maiden womb of the universe. Light is God's eldest daughter in the family of physical forces. Old night and chaos were touched to splendour and harmony by the brooding spirit of Deity. "And God said, Let there

be light: and there was light;" here we are at the dim beginning of things; God has begun to unfold the universe. "I am the light of the world;" here we are far advanced in the course of things; God has humanized Himself, limited the Illimitable to the dimensions of the human, and is going about this part of His creation in the form of a Man. How could the solar system be without the sun? Is it possible to have a circumference without a centre? Well, a sunless solar system is the counterpart of a Christless world. Before all things, the Beginning of all things, all things hold together in the Christ of God. The world-creating Word became flesh that He might create a new humanity. "If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." For Christ strikes a celestial newness through our terrestrial oldness. The low-flying things give place to the high-up realities. He bridges the gulf of spiritual distance that separates us from God. The forgiver of sin, He is also the giver of the life that is life indeed. Is it too much to say that, apart from Christ, even the God of all hope has no hope for the world? Evidently, God has no other way of saving the world but in and through Christ. He is the fount whence flow the sweetening streams of the higher humanities; He is the Spiritual Sun, out of which come all our immortal radiances. Before Newton, men thought that colour was produced by refraction. But, by a

memorable series of experiments, Newton showed that refraction simply separates the colours already existing in the white light. Thus all of our rich human colors lie back, fold upon fold and hue upon hue, in the white light of the Saviour of the World. In Him we touch the unfathomed mysteriousness of our own being; in Him we glimpse the unplumbed deeps in the Being of God; and so, in Him, our wandering spiritual tones are gathered up and wrought into unjarring harmonies. He alone unveils the essential worth of the human, giving it unfluctuating value in the mystic markets of Eternity. We are told that the force of gravity is twenty-seven times greater on the surface of the sun than it is on the earth. If a man could be transferred to the sun, he would weigh two tons. Is it not richly suggestive of the increased value and weight of a human being, standing in the revealing glory of the Light of the World? The creative Christ explains the divine estimate of human beings.

II

The creativeness of light is superior only to its marvellous power in putting on various forms and colours. Here is this blood-red rose. Hold it close to your soul-ear, and its crimson lips whisper: "My rich red comes from the fiery red of the sun." But here is another rose. Its petals are hued with a tender goldenness. Hear also its confession of

faith: "I, too, believe in the very same sun that gives beauty to my heart-red sister." Now look up: there goes a tuneful lover on wings. His brooklike madrigal flows refreshingly down out of the air. Yet his song is hardly more sweetly miraculous than is his wondrous back of grey, his delicately white tail feathers, and his white and blackish wings. But, by way of contrast, a tuft of flashing yellow streaked with jet black is doing bird-wonders in a nearby tree. Yet the large white-and-black-trimmed warbler, as well as that small saffron-and-dark-velvet-gowned creature, are alike the artistic exhibitions of the sun. Deep in the jungles the tiger burns with a fierce brightness. How did bars of such exquisite softness come to lie down upon that ferocious body? Through the versatility of the very sun that lends to the mane of the lion, the tiger's master, its tawny gold. Look at these three grapes: one is purple, one is blue-black, one is emerald. Is not each just a variegated globe of sun-juice? For light revels in clothing itself in million-tinted hues. Light is the secret of all that is fair and beautiful in earth and sea and sky. The thousand-featured creation says: "I am what I am because light is what it is."

But light's versatility in the physical is just a large hint at our Lord's versatility in the spiritual. What true man ever lived that did not own Him Master and King? There is no such thing as human trueness apart from Christ's indwelling the human and

expanding it into its possible human largeness and nobility. Life devoid of Christliness is a sun-ray sheared off from the sun. What kind of human temperament is there that cannot be mastered into spiritual kingliness by Christ? Verily, He is the Saviour of the men-who-can't that they may become the men-who-can. The King-Man of the Universe imparts royalty to His subjects by virtue of His splendidly creative power and versatility.

Consider this for a little. It is quite generally admitted that Shakespeare is the most opulent and many-sided genius in history. Think of the poet's power to project himself into so many different characters. Now he is a king, now a queen, now a clown, now an Antony, now a Cleopatra, now a Cæsar, now a Hamlet, now an Ophelia, now an Iago, now a Romeo, now a Juliet. Is not Shakespeare's overwhelming genius seen in his ability to assume any character? Seemingly, he delights in hiding himself behind the overflowing richness of his powers. We know so little of Shakespeare, the man himself is veiled in a kind of perplexing twilight, just because he conceals himself in so many varied human rôles. Thinking of his fund of sentiments, maxims, and observations; of his influence on science, art, history, politics, physics, and philosophy, the critic can only say: "Shakespeare is like a great primeval forest, whence timber shall be cut and used as long as winds blow and leaves are green."

But if Shakespeare, by his affluent genius, re-creates in imagination and moves his characters to and fro in the fields of memory, Christ exercises first-hand, creative lordship over all kinds and conditions of souls, and causes them to manifest His spirit in successive ages and in countless spheres of life. Here, for example, is John, brother of James, son of Zebedee. Like his father and brother, he is a fisherman; he is one of millions of Jews living in the first century of our era; he is an ambitious, hot-tempered, average human being; goodness and badness retire with him every night and get up with him every morning. "But," you say, "we call him Saint John; his writings are more familiar, if far less voluminous than Shakespeare's; what, then, is the explanation of this wonderful man?" There is but one answer: Saint John is a disciple of Christ, a shining human beam raying out from the Light of the World. A very different man, by the whole diameter of being almost, is that haughty, powerful young Pharisee named Saul of Tarsus. His righteousness is as perpendicular as Cleopatra's Needle over in Central Park, and almost as hard. Yet this disciple-slaying Saul not only changes his name, he himself is changed. The substance of his character is transformed; the inmost fibre of his being is recreated; the centre of his personality is shifted. What caused it? Who wrought it? If the pillared firmament be not rottenness, nor earth's base built on stubble, Jesus Christ as certainly

changed Paul the persecutor into Paul the saint as two and two make four, as the air you breathe strikes health through your cheeks. The universe is no stronger argument for the being of God than are John and Paul for the redemptive versatility of Christ. Nature grows only one kind of leaf to a tree, though the tree may flaunt hundreds of its kind; but the Tree of Life is green and golden with every variety of age, temperament, strength, weakness, faith, hope, love. All hang there, mellow and beautiful, as they take on an ever-deepening ripeness. William Blake's childhood imagination was so vivid that, playing among the trees of the field, he thought he saw angels in every one. And do not eyes washed in the silver waters of Christian faith see something quite as wonderful? Walking in the fields of history, we behold the overarching, outspreading branches of the Tree of Life. Distinctly visible among those branches are Augustine, Francis, Ignatius, Bernard, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Edwards, Robertson, Beecher, Brooks, Martineau, Fairbairn, Gladstone, and a great multitude no man can number out of all tribes and kingdoms and peoples. There they cluster, in immortal greenness, growing larger, more Christlike, more awe-struck, more thrillingly alive, as our poor, distraught human regiments march bleedingly on to the coronation of the Christ in the completion of the worlds. Why, when we think of our Lord's versatility, little wonder that the Swan of Avon should forget to

sing of unhappy kings and weeping queens long enough to write in his will, "the last notes Shakespeare struck within the hearing of this world":— "I commend my soul into the hands of God, my Creator, hoping and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting." When Shakespeare gives his soul back to God, stained through and through by the Saviourhood of Jesus Christ, is it not time for all souls to surrender to the outstretched arms of Heaven's pitying mercy and whitening grace, as they voice Augustine's soul-deep lament: "Too late I loved Thee, O Thou Beauty of Ancient Days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee?" For it is incontestably true that—

> "The man who hearkens all day long
> To the sea's cosmic-thoughted song
> Comes with purged ears to lesser speech,
> And something of the skyey reach
> Greatens the gaze that feeds on space;
> The starlight writes upon his face
> That bathes in starlight, and the morn
> Chrisms with dew, when day is born,
> The eyes that drink the holy light
> Welling from the deep springs of night."

III

When our Saviour said, "I am the light of the world," He intimated the inexhaustibleness of His nature and resources. Considering the amazing

abundance of light, thinkers ask: Where does the sun get its vast supplies of fuel? What stokes the fires of the sun? The answer now accepted is that given by Helmholtz. He says that the sun's bulk is gradually contracting, the energy thus caused being turned into heat. It is estimated that an annual contraction of 150 feet of the sun's radius would produce its enormous volume of heat and light. But such contraction would not be noticeable by the greatest telescopes for 10,000 years; and then this contraction would have to continue for ten million years more before the sun would be too dead to sustain life throughout its solar empire. Professor Simon Newcomb estimated that the heat thrown off by the sun every hour is equal to the burning of a quantity of coal that would cover the sun's entire surface to a depth of twenty feet.

Now, this boundlessness of sun-energy is a noble symbol, surely, of Christ's inexhaustibleness. The physical sun may ultimately fail, indeed it is doomed to extinction; but the Light of the World simply cannot fail; neither cosmic winds nor infernal cyclones can quench His light, because His is the vitality of Godhead, the genius of Eternity. Can the unbeginning God have an ending? Having power to lay down His life, He had power to take it again. Forever abroad in the worlds and the centuries, He goes conqueringly on from epoch to epoch. The planets may get untuned, but He remains King of Death and Hades, Alpha and Omega,

undestroyed because indestructible, undying because deathless.

Some very practical thoughts arise out of this great truth of Christ's unfailingness. One is this: The height of life to which earth-pilgrims of ancient and modern years have attained in the Land that has no need of sun or moon. "At what price," Socrates asked of his judges, who had condemned him to death, "would you not estimate a conference with Orpheus and Musæus, Hesiod and Homer? I indeed should be willing to die again, if this should be true." Well, it must be true, even though to our thing-cursed era, groaning under its weight of iron and stone and stubble, such a thought may be deemed impractical and quite out of place. Yet it is hard to believe that any normal soul can repress a thrill of joy as he thinks of the spiritual stature of the noble dead who have for ages been growing more and more alive. How intensely alive they must be today! Think of that trinity of the old dispensation—Moses, Elijah, and Elisha. Two of them were glad to vacate Heaven long enough to meet with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. Unto what majestic proportions of manhood all must have attained under the tutelage of the Master in Glory! Dante said that the dying Stephen "made his eyes gates to behold the skies." If under that deadly rain of stones, Stephen's face took on an angelic brightness, how could average mortals dare to look at that face, now that it has been gazing

so long into the fountains of beauty flowing from the Christ? Stephen's face must be like a ruby smitten by the sun, or, as the old song suggests, there must be more than a garden in his face; something of the ultimate beauty, born of the very life of God, must have passed into his countenance. Ruskin called Dante the central man of all the world; and Carlyle held that "Dante is world-great not because he is world-wide, but because he is world-deep." But there are those who think that Dante's world-greatness is due neither to his world-wideness nor to his world-deepness, but to his heaven-highness. A kind of supernatural loftiness, a strain of celestial sublimity, characterizes this man who gave voice to ten dumb centuries. But do you not think that that august man has grown tremendously during his six hundred years' absence from the earth? Who shall say what grander dimensions are his, with his nearer, clearer vision of that Love which moves "the sun in Heaven and all the stars?"

A further consideration is the encouragement which Christ's fathomless Saviourhood gives to men and women now on the earth, right here in the thick of things, when the planet seems staggering under its weight of woe and sin and injustice. Emerson once said that the man never lived who could feed us ever. And he is grandly right—no mere man can be the Bread of Life to the souls of men. Some of these ages, those belated thinkers,

professing to be advanced, will wake up to the fact that they are some centuries behind the times. We are only truly up with the times as we are livingly in with the eternities. No—a thousand times no—no mere man can feed us; but God manifest in the flesh; God strengthening our weakness; God stooping to our lowliness and lifting us to the high, still places in Christ—such a God verily feeds all who will have His food. Imparting to blind mortal eyes the loveliness that is immortal, He makes life suddenly sweet by opening it to His unsearchable riches. In His presence hunger and thirst vanish utterly away, save as they make the soul more capacious for His food and drink. Giving to men a distinct heavenliness of temper, He makes them assuredly aware that, however dark the night, the shadow-draped hills but conceal a brighter dawn. "I am the light of the world"—the light of all worlds; the light that never goes out, but burns glowingly on and on, until Heaven's light and earth's darkness shall kiss each other in the white radiance of Eternity. What a glorious commentary on this passage is Mrs. Alice Meynell's poem, "Christ in the Universe," than which Albert Cock, in the *British Review,* said a greater poem had not been written in the last one hundred years:

> "With the ambiguous earth
> His dealings have been told us; these abide;
> The signal to a maid, the human birth,
> The lesson, and the Young Man crucified.

But not a star of all
The unimaginable stars has heard
How He administered this terrestrial ball;
Our race have kept their Lord's entrusted word.

Of those earth-visiting feet
None knows the secret, cherished, perilous—
The terrible, shamefast, frightened, whispered, sweet
Heart-shattering secret of His way with us.

No planet knows that this
Our wayside planet, carrying land and wave,
Love and life multiplied, and pain and bliss,
Bears as chief treasure one forsaken grave.

Nor in our little day,
May his devices with the heavens be guessed,
His pilgrimage to thread the Milky Way,
Or His bestowals there be manifest.

But in the eternities
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear
A million alien gospels, in what guise
He walked the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

Oh, be prepared, my soul!
To read the inconceivable, to scan
The million forms of God those stars unroll
When in our turn we show to them—a Man."

IV

THE RELIGION OF CHILDHOOD *

"Moreover his mother made him a little robe, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice."—I SAM. 11:19.

I AM very much embarrassed tonight, my friends. I am chafing under the lock of sealed lips. Your pastor commands me to say nothing about him in this anniversary sermon. I am not to mention his name, not to speak of his work, not to say anything about the conspicuous part he has played in emphasizing the religion of childhood in the Christian Church. He is the originator of the Junior Congregation; but I must not mention it. He is the greatest preacher to children, the severest of all critics, in the world; but I would not dare to say such a thing in this presence. He is loved by the children of Brooklyn and of the country as no other minister; still I can say absolutely nothing about this. He must continue to be loved on in tongueless silence! He has published volumes dealing with the religious life of the child which have become classics; but alas! that is a matter for reviews and

* Anniversary sermon in First Reformed Church, Brooklyn, November 14, 1915.

reviewers—I am not even privileged to refer to it. Am I not in an embarrassing situation indeed? Why, there are so many things that could be said, and ought to be said, at this time; but I must leave them thoughtlessly alone. My lips are sealed; my tongue is tied; I can't even mention Doctor Farrar's name. I would like to tell him how the ministers of the land love him; but I am strictly forbidden. I would like to say to him how grateful we are for his pioneer work on behalf of the children of the nation; but I am doomed to silence. Imagine my unique and solitary loneliness in a day when everybody is talking at everybody, and everybody talking at the same time! Doctor Albert J. Lyman, the golden-souled, said Doctor Farrar brought us a great new thought: To create a real Church out of children instead of merely training them up for the Church. That in itself, so richly characteristic of our vanished velvet heart, ought to be repeated here and now; but alas and alack! I am under promise not to say one word of a personal nature. And I always try to keep my promises—at least some of them. That I am succeeding fairly well tonight, you may judge for yourselves.

Notwithstanding my handicap, however, this is a joyful occasion. Muzzled as I am by the lack of free speech, that dangerous oral shell so recklessly tossed about by Americans and—others, I am resolved to wear my fetters becomingly and not un-

duly kick against the goads. Isn't that orthodoxically Pauline? Every one should be happy, though human—that is my philosophy of life, and I am going to practise it even if I am forbidden to talk as I should like. My subject is, "The Religion of Childhood." I wish to catch at least the afterglow of some of these lightninglike forces flashing to and fro in this unfadingly beautiful picture and story of Samuel's childhood. If I occasionally turn aside to apply the lessons to the children of today, the facts and forces shaping their lives, you must not presumptuously infer that I am speaking of local or personal matters, or of anything that is remotely germane to this anniversary occasion. Am I not under promise to be icily, freezingly impersonal? Have I not said that I would be spinelessly neutral in recounting any of the grave issues between the pastor of this Church and the religious life of children? Meantime, I am going to be brave because I know I have your sympathy and your pity. Imagine a ravenously hungry man within easy reach of the most deliciously appetizing food. Everything he craves is right there before him. All he has to do is to reach forth and take what he wants. And yet he must not eat one bite! He is the victim of "touch not, taste not, handle not." Well, that hungry man is my twin brother in tribulation. I am sitting at a feast of memory, at the close of an epoch, at the dawn of a larger beginning. In vision, I see boys and girls, who are now fathers and

mothers, gone out into all the earth from this original Junior Congregation; and yet—my vision must fade—unvoiced, unworded, unpainted!

I

Turning to this lovely history, the first factor I find in the child's religion—the sweetest, the purest, the simplest this side of the angels—is motherhood. "Moreover his mother!" Ah, what histories, what heroisms, what poems, what consecrations, what loves go forever ringing and singing through the words! As the source lies back of the river, as the sun overhangs the million-tinted meadows of June, as the atmosphere lends itself to the trilling voices of birds in the green of the year, so the mother stands back of her child, overhangs her child, breathes through her child. Who was Augustine? A saint—plus his mother! Who was John Wesley? A statesman-evangelist—plus his mother! Who was Abraham Lincoln? A great human redeemer—plus his mother! Who was Henry Ward Beecher? Our supreme preacher—plus his mother! And so the story runs—the swift, dazzling, fire-footed, soul-fashioning stuff that makes the heart of history throb with divine flame. "But that is old," you say. "I have heard it so often." Yes; it is old, very old—as old as the heart of God, as old as the deepmost, innermost genius of the universe, as old as the first atom that went into the making of the

first pillar supporting the domed heavens! And yet this old, old thing is so enchantingly new that it thrills us, it awes us, it inspires us. Oh, how movingly, how fascinatingly new it is! New as the smile of innocence upon the faces of little children! New as the love which each generation of lovers whisper in moonlight and starglow! New as the last prayer of faith that soars up from a quickened soul to the throne of grace! New as the newest aspiration stirring our wills to do God's will on earth even as it is done in Heaven! Truly, this factor of motherhood so shaping her child that her child shapes the world into which he comes for righteousness and for God, is very old and very new. But, better than being old or new, it is everlastingly true.

How many mothers, think you, have been brought to a more vivid consciousness of the meaning of their motherhood by the Junior Congregation and its Father? No man can say, because they are a multitude, scattered here, there, and yonder, which no man can number. But of this much it is our plain, unvarnished duty to bear witness: Mothers have been recalled to a deep new sense of their mothering responsibilities by seeing the unfolding religious life of their children normally developed in this great little Church dedicated to the service of little great people! And if I were not under promise to be stoically impersonal, I would turn aside just here to say that because of his work for

children, Doctor Farrar's name is a household word in countless homes.

II

A second factor in the religion of childhood is discretion. "His mother made him a little robe." Hannah did not try to make her husband's religious clothes fit little Samuel, the prophet-to-be. She knew that Samuel had his own religious life to live. It must not be a forced, stereotyped, mechanical, unnatural religion. The child's religion is untaught and untrained, of course, yet it is spontaneous and sincere. Therefore, it must be bright, joyous, wholesome, healthful. Henry Drummond was fond of repeating this story of a little girl. She said to her father: "Papa, I want you to say something for God to me, something I want to tell Him very much. I have such a little voice that I don't think He could hear it away up in Heaven; but you have a big man's voice, and He will be sure to hear you." Taking the child in his arms, the father told her that, though God were at that moment surrounded by his holy angels, singing to Him one of the grandest and sweetest songs of praise ever heard in Heaven, he was sure that God would say to them: "Hush! There's a little girl away down on the earth, who wants to whisper something in My ear." Was he not a wise father? Was he not a Christian father? Did he not have the genius of making re-

ligion real to that realest of all mortals, the child?

Now, graciously emphasizing this factor of discretion in dealing with the spiritual life of our children, is one of the fine contributions the Junior Congregation makes to the well-rounded activities of the Church. When we consider how much indiscretion there has been and still is in this matter, we ought to appreciate that contribution all the more. "Do you think my little girl is old enough to join the Church?" asked a mother. "How old is she?" rejoined the pastor. "She is only seventeen," replied the mother. Poor little thing! Verily, she is old enough for church membership! Moreover, if she had had the privilege of growing up in a Junior Congregation, which, as Dr. Lyman says, creates a Church out of children instead of merely training them up for the Church, the mother might never have asked that rebukingly accusing question.

III

Vigilance, watchfulness, is a third factor in the religious life of children. Samuel had a mother—a godly mother; she was discreet—a disciple of common sense; and she was keenly awake to her boy's growing, unfolding life. She did not bring up last year's robe for this year's Samuel; she "brought it to him from year to year." Samuel is the same, and yet not the same. Samuel retains his self-identity from year to year, but he does not experience

the same religious thoughts and emotions during each successive year. The miracle of growth is in his nature; the inner and outer powers of expansion are asserting themselves; it has been decreed from eternity that Samuel is a moving, changing being in a moving, changing world. Which way shall he move? How shall he change?

These questions may be helpfully answered by the vigilant eyes of parents, preachers, and teachers. From year to year we must enter more deeply into our children's religious thinking. From year to year we must make an ampler, finer robe for their spiritual natures. From year to year we must approach them more understandingly, more sympathetically. They are young and fresh and sparkling; for them life's at the spring; they are rigid critics of the antiquated and out-of-date. We may be tempted to grow wickedly old, cynically unchildlike, losing touch with this strange, mystical, new human world unfolding itself before our very eyes.

Just here, it seems to me, comes in one of the essential values of the work we are commemorating tonight. It keeps pace with the inner, unfolding life of boys and girls. It does not allow our children to pass through their plastic years, receive the mould of little pagans, then wander away into the far country, eventually coming back to decency broken and bleeding specimens of what they might have been. Rather, it seizes the truth that the soul be-

longs to God; that all souls have been redeemed in Christ; that every soul may be trained, not to succeed in life, but to succeed in living; that the time to begin is childhood; and the time to end—*never!* God will complete that good work which we have here begun. "My son writes to me every night before he sleeps," a justly proud mother said to me the other evening. Many faithful sons and daughters have been born in this old Church. If, in various parts of the world, they look with increasing gratitude to their mother church, it is because the mother church took them in their childhood and taught them that Christianity is not something to be patched onto the robe of life; but that it is the robe itself, woven without seam throughout, dynamically inspiring, beautifully comforting and nobly sustaining all through their checkered, unfolding human years. This Church has simply given its little folks a chance to develop and express their own religious hopes and aspirations. It is what every church should do; and because of your noble example and wise leadership, churches everywhere are going to give this matter its rightful place in their thought and practice.

IV

The fourth factor I mention is fatherhood. Who accompanied this ancient mother, as she journeyed year after year to Jerusalem, carrying a new robe

for young Samuel? Happily, the answer is at hand: "She came up with her husband." Did you husbands hear that? "She came up with her husband"—do not lightly pass over that part of my text, O men and fathers! Very little is known of Elkanah, Hannah's husband. Hannah seems to have been a full-fledged suffragette before New Jersey and New York were on the map. Evidently, she was the guiding spirit of that far-off home. Elkanah, from all accounts, simply occupied a position of "benevolent neutrality." And yet, as little as we know of Elkanah, that little is most important. It is this: He did not attend church by proxy. He did not say: "The temple is well enough for Hannah and the boy; but——" No; he did not say that, and then turn to the pink edition of the Jerusalem *Daily Times* to feast his eyes upon the latest sensation or reptilian scandal! Elkanah went up with his wife to the house of God, where their child was being wisely and definitely moulded for time and eternity.

And this is one of the things we are commemorating tonight: The influence of the Junior Congregation upon the Senior, the leadership of childhood in its relation to men and women. You fathers owe a vast debt to the little folk assembling here throughout the years. The trust of a child has put many a man's blackest doubts to shame. A friend gave me a story the other day of the famous men who met at Ferguson's house in Edinburgh.

Dugald Stewart, the philosopher; Hutton, the geologist; Adam Smith, the author of "The Wealth of Nations"; and Robert Burns, the Scotch skylark —all of them were there. Yes; and a little tow-headed boy named Walter was there. Looking at a picture on the wall, Burns read beneath it a couplet that appealed to him. He inquired the author of the lines, but none of the famous men knew. Yet the little towhead knew, and he whispered the author's name to the man nearest him, and the man told the great poet. Then Burns called the boy to him. Placing his hand on his head, he said: "You will be a greater man than your grandfather." Sir Walter Scott—for the little towheaded boy became the world-famous wizard of romance—said that the moment when Robert Burns put his hand upon his head was the hour of his ordination in literature. Now, my friend had written upon the margin of the white sheet to which the story was pinned, these words: "Ordination of a child." Can you guess the name of my friend? Well, while you are guessing, let me say that this same friend, many years ago in the city of Philadelphia, was asked to go on a serious errand. It was night, and the man who called at the pastor's house had the face of a criminal. He said he wanted the minister to go to see a sick child. And the minister went. The house was located in one of the desperate sections of the city; and, indeed, the haunt where the sick child was resembled a den for criminals more than a house.

As they climbed up the dark, tottering stairway, the minister was greeted by the growls of a ferocious bulldog. "Weren't you afraid?" I asked, breathlessly, as he told me the story. "Well, you see," he replied with a twinkle in his fun-loving eyes, "under the circumstances I wouldn't have been altogether human not to have felt a few chills chasing each other up and down my spinal column." And then he paused, adding quickly: "Just then I heard a sick little child crying, and I knew I was safe." A child had ordained his safety, a child had led him on the mission of the Master, and all these years he has been one of the faithful servants of our children. When Mr. Widener died last week, he was described as a capitalist, a philanthropist, an art collector, and a lover of children. The supreme distinction is the last, and without which the others make life weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable. And it is because you are a lover of children, Doctor Farrar, (I must break my promise, and be personal for a moment,) that we love you. Through your ministry to children, you have not only served them, but you have made a profound appeal to fathers and mothers, who, because of you, have dedicated themselves more joyously and devotedly to the religious nurture and training of their children. Because of this, and because of you—you, with your great big, brothering, childlike heart—we bring you the greetings of the city. "Look for me," said Francis Thompson, "in the nurseries of Heaven." May it be a long,

long time before we miss your familiar figure from the streets of Brooklyn; but when we do, we shall know where to find you—in the nurseries of Heaven, still loving little children, still loved by little children, and still led by little children into ever-enlarging dimensions of your own Christlike manhood!

V

THE HIGHER UNITY

"There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."—GAL. III: 28.

IN hours of crises, a great soul sometimes catches and flashes forth a light which can never be extinguished. Ever afterward, amid life's spiritual, mental, and social darkness, that light shines upon the pathway of the race like a beacon from the infinite morning. Such a light shines out in our text. Kindled by one of those eager, passionate, white-hot, soul-creative moods when a man's being is on fire, it defies the winds of the world to blow it out. They simply blow it on, not out, up and over and across, until the world is encircled by the glory of it. All that was dear to Paul —his teaching, his life-work, his spiritual vision, his faith in God—was at stake. The proposition he had been challenged to meet and settle was this: Was Christianity to be the ultimate world-religion—thrilling with history and throbbing with eternity—or was it to be supplemented by Judaism? Was it to go forward, majestic, life-giving, invincible, or was it to go backward, dwindling at last to the

dimensions of the cradle in which its infancy was rocked, perishing before it was given opportunity to lift up its voice in the world's highways and by-ways? The apostle's answer is my text. It is the word of a super-statesman. Breaking all purely human bounds, it voices the genius of Heaven and earth. After looking the world's untoward facts squarely in the face, Paul dauntlessly grasps the higher, the larger, the completing realities of Christ. For the twanging, clanging discords of men and nations, he substitutes the higher unity revealed in his Lord and Master.

I

By way of approaching the higher unity, let us consider, first, the discords of history. What are their roots, their causes? Are they not begotten by the perversion of the truth contained in this text? What produces, for example, racial discord, altogether aside from natural intellectual antagonisms, moral and political differences? Certainly each race owes its existence to the same God. Nobody disputes the truth that Jew, Greek, Slav, Teuton, Frank, Anglo-Saxon, one and all, have the same Creator. Then why are they not able to live together in peace in this great household named the world? That, of course, is a question that goes to the very heart of the philosophy of history. It will hardly be answered in a sermon or in many volumes. But

of this much we are sure, and up to this point, the question gets itself answered: Racial discords are engendered and accentuated when one race, or one nation, wantonly trespasses upon the inherent rights and individuality of another race or nation. It could not be otherwise so long as human nature is what it is. Nations have an individuality just as persons have an individuality. Therefore, nations, races, have the God-given right to live their own life; but no race, no nation, has the right to autocratically impose its life upon another race or nation. A nation may assume that it has such a right; a people may become so conceited, so chauvinistic, so fanatical over their own methods of life as to sincerely believe that they are called of God to force, to impose, literally, their national habits upon another people. But such fanaticism invariably results in disaster. It is the old, old weakness of ignoring the viewpoint of the other man. Because, as an individual, I entertain certain convictions, adhere to certain religious and political principles, believe in certain social doctrines, why that is no absolutely valid argument for my neighbour entertaining them. While mine may be superior to his, they may be inferior. More fundamental still, and deeper than any logical or intellectual aspect of the matter, my neighbour likes to do his own thinking, prefers to do his own voting, believes in living his own life. If he is wrong and I am right, it is my privilege to be a religious, political, or intellectual

missionary and try to convert him; but what right have I to shoot him, or shell him, or slander him?

Now a nation is made up of individuals, and out of these individuals comes a definite national consciousness, a distinct racial individuality that cannot be imposed upon with impunity. For races live and move and have their being in God, God designs that each shall make a specific contribution to the life of the whole, even though at stated epochs nations undertake to break away from God, sell themselves to do evil, and are dehumanized in the hell of war. I think of God and the nations as I do of New York Bay and the various craft upon its waters. Looking out my study window, I see tugs, yachts, barges, launches, ocean liners, and sometimes a dreadnought. But the water treats them all alike; it fits the shape and size of every one. Furthermore, over its liquid streets every vessel may glide on to its haven. But just let the launch get in the way of the tugboat, or the tugboat in the way of the palatial ship, or the ship in the way of the dreadnought, and there is ruin and disaster. But is the water responsible for the wreckage? Not at all. The water treats its floating children impartially, opens its silvery paths to serve each, offers a billowy roadway for all to reach their respective goals. Who, then, but the pilot—barring storm and unavoidable accidents—is responsible for his vessel's safety? He is the guiding spirit, the boat

is the obedient body, and it moves in whatever direction he wills.

The defects of the simile are patent enough. A personal God cannot be likened unto an impersonal element named water; the long, sinuous windings of a nation's career are not so simple as a vessel's journey from port to port; nor is the spirit of a living people happily compared unto an automatic, lifeless thing such as a boat. And yet, notwithstanding its obvious defects, I am not sure that my illustration should be discounted entirely. For that figure of the pilot, not merely of boats but of states, looms so large, and his acts reach so far, that he must be reckoned with. In a word, it is when the pilot turns pirate that the sea is a place of anarchy and chaos; and it is when the leaders of a people become brigands at heart, though masquerading under the name of statesmen pleading the necessity of national expansion and kindred twaddle,—it is then that the world runs red with blood and roars with the flame of war. Is not this indeed one of the iron-toned discords of history—the spirit that prompts one race or nation to impose its methods of government upon another race or nation? Nor is the enormity of the crime lessened because its teachers, scientists, philosophers, and military vandals assert that it is all a part of the cosmic programme, the evolution of life upon this planet.

A second of the historic discords, as distinct from

and yet interwoven with the racial, is political. The bondman and the freeman, the slave and the master—what a long, bitter fight have they waged with each other! The battle, of course, is not over; it is one of the backlying factors in this world-war; but there is no doubt, I think, as to the ultimate outcome. The bondman must win his freedom, and in winning his freedom he will liberate his master, ofttimes the more abject slave of the two. Really, when one tries to think soberly of the fences separating the bond and the free, is it not almost incredible that they were not levelled, practically as well as theoretically, long ago? For upon what does this doctrine of bond and free rest? In the last analysis, it rests upon the assumption—the silly, thickheaded, colossal conceit—that one man is better than another man. Morally better? No! Intellectually better? No! He may be a composite—a moral leper and mental blunderbuss mercifully covered by one set of skin. But lo! because, forsooth, his dead ancestor disgraced a throne; or else he traces his family line back for seven generations instead of going back seventy times seven and viewing the dugout in which his forbears lived; or else his father left a fortune, dooming him to loll his way through life, cheating him out of all initiative and noble adventure—why upon these and other foundations as nonsensically flimsy, one man idiotically assumes that he is mysteriously better, wrought of a little finer clay than his brother man, who

manages to hold together solely because he is composed of rather sticky mud!

O men, in the name of truth, stand out beneath those stars that blaze and whirl; ask those cosmic fires that raged millions of ages before there was any man to watch them burn; listen to that wrinkled sea that made its moan cycles before there was the pomp of a throne or the crust of a beggar, and which will moan on and swallow up civilizations after kings and peasants have lost their names but not their records; inquire of that grave and the coffined dust within it, which no epitaph can flatter and no loud-lipped monument can call back to life; above all, retire into the hushed, abysmal depths of your own being and inquire of that God who wears the universe as a robe and stirs its myriad folds with the breath of life—inquire of Him who inhabiteth eternity wherein you, who break into the world with a cry and leave it with a groan, are better than your fellow man! I verily believe that God will answer for kings and peasants, for millionaires and paupers, for learned and ignorant: "Jehovah, who createth the ends of the earth, is no respecter of persons, but He is an infinitely emphatic respecter of character."

Still another historic discord is suggested by my text. It is the debate, somewhat acute in our time, between "male and female." Whatever one's views upon the vital question of equal suffrage for men

and women, any man capable of healthy shame blushes for the agelong stupidity of his sex in brazenly assuming its superiority to woman. Essentially, this is the ethic of the forest projected into human relations. The lioness, we are told, never touches the kill until his leonine majesty has satiated his own hunger. She may have heroically assisted in hunting down their dinner; but when the meal is prepared, with a lordly roar and a kingly swat the lion invites his wife to the rear while he proceeds to do the honors of his jungle banquet! Of course, if there is anything left over, anything that his majesty's digestive larder cannot possibly contain, the lioness is grudgingly welcome thereto. In most savage tribes a similar rule is practised. The male assumes his superiority, and, if questioned, quickly enforces it by his brute strength. But when and where did the brute get his authority to prescribe laws for human society? Is it not time, therefore, that we men were voluntarily relinquishing our hold upon the habits of animals and customs of savages? As Tennyson says, not one of us can altogether escape from the lower world within; we are yet in process of being made, and æon after æon shall pass before the crowning Age of ages comes. But we may at least set ourselves at such an angle toward these and other great human problems as to inspire hope in the ultimate fulfilment of the larger and finer half of the seer's great picture of man:

"All about him shadow still, but, while the races flower and fade,
Prophet-eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on the shade,
Till the peoples all are one, and all their voices blend in choric
Hallelujah to the Maker, 'It is finished. Man is made.'"

II

But to merely suggest or point out the discords of the world is comparatively easy. That requires no great constructive power, no insight, no vision. It is a truism in literature that the first-rate critic is a second-rate genius. Is it because his capacity for fault-finding kills out, finally, his creative gifts? It may be so. Yet we could ill afford to dispense with the services of sincere criticism. Nevertheless, it is the high task of genius to at once find flaws and supply remedies. Christianity does that always. Revealing the abyss, it points the way to the height. Precisely that is Paul's method in my text. Grasping the causes of racial, political, and sexual discords, he shows how the jarring notes are taken up into the sovereign harmony. "There can be," he says, "neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Let us see how this higher unity of man in Christ works out. First of all, apply the law to race. Let us use our imagination for a moment. Here is a vast circle, vast enough to include all nations, all

races. At the centre of the circle is Christ; at the circumference are the Slav, the Teuton, the Frank, the African, the Anglo-Saxon. Now let me ask: Will the Slav be less a Slav because he is Christian? No. He will be a better Slav, a nobler utterance of what God intended the Slav to be. Will the Teuton lose his individuality in becoming Christian? By no means. His individuality will be raised to its highest power. He shall be able to appreciate the viewpoint of people who differ from him. He shall still have the Teutonic strain and genius; but he shall have something more—something that dispels his savagery, something that ameliorates his fatalism: he shall have Christ! Will the Frenchman, the Anglo-Saxon, the Asiatic, the African, be less distinctively typal and individual, racially speaking, when fully Christianized, than they are at present? No. They will be infinitely better types of their kind. Thinking people do not want the nations to become externally alike. That would be to commit suicide by monotony. The process would be somewhat slower than annihilation by war, but not less fatal, I venture, to the realization of a complete humanity. If the universe, and the countless forms of life within it, are any criterion, God loves variety; and woe betide the nation or individual that undertakes to clothe the inner, unfolding spirit of the race in one deadly, outer form! To be a Christian, then, is to be an American plus, a German plus, a Frenchman plus. For the higher unity comes

not by subtraction, but by addition; not by taking away, but by adding to. "Ye are all one moral force, one spiritual society in Christ Jesus." That is Paul's thought. Is it not grand enough for Christians to work for, for statesmen to plan for, for nations to live for? For, whether intentionally or not, it is the Christian "Circle" of which Markham sings:

> "He drew a circle that shut me out—
> Heretic, rebel, a thing to clout.
> But love and I had the wit to win:
> We drew a circle that took him in!"

Suppose we apply our law, also, to politics. Paul says that in this upper, health-bracing atmosphere there can be neither bond nor free. He said it to Rome, with its scores of slaves, oftentimes, in a single household. The Roman aristocrat had grown such a mental kink that he thought a special permit was issued, in the structure and order of the universe, whereby he was foreordained to freedom while other men were doomed to bondage. But Paul had later information on the divine order of things; and he reported it regardless of what the censor might say or do. Cæsar had heard only the yelp of the beast; but the apostle had caught the golden notes of angels. "Is not the end of politics, the science of government, to serve me, to pamper me?" asked the blue-blooded Roman, a criminal in his palace, a slave amid his pomp. "No," answered

Paul, from his dungeon. "You and your tribe are living under a forged bill of rights; you have misinterpreted the laws of the universe, which care no more for a patrician than for a worm; and, finally, you have not heard the decrees of the Kingdom of God. There can be neither bond nor free in that Kingdom. God cares more for the hut of the humblest good man than He does for the palace of a wicked king. O Cæsar, you are a slave in your Golden House, while I, Paul, have found freedom in my dungeon. Come out of your gilded jail, therefore, and meet me on the heights of life and being, where all men are brothers, where the jarring discords of bond and free are caught up into the symphonies of love and service."

Now, just suppose, once again, that the spirit of Paul's truth had been accepted by the politics of the world a thousand years ago. I am aware that it requires a tremendous stretch of the imagination to suppose any such thing. The grim, ghastly facts of history are so grimly and ghastly opposed to it. But let us suppose that the democracy of the Kingdom of God, and the democracy which, I believe, is inherent in the nature of things, had been adopted by kings, queens, kaisers, emperors, princes, statesmen, and politicians away back in the far-gone epochs of the world. Had that been done, could history be what it is? A thousand times no! Could all these bloody, brutal, inhuman chapters blind the

eye with their letters of flame and deeds of shame? They would have been utterly impossible, unthinkable. Let me ask another question: If the teaching of Christ, and the politics of the Kingdom of God, had even been seriously thought of during the past ten years—I mean seriously as opposed to the smug hypocrisy, devilish motives, and fiendish machinations which have been harboured day and night—would the world be on fire,—the fire of military incendiarism,—at this moment? No! This planetary holocaust could never have been. You know and I know—and what is infinitely more important, God knows—August, 1914, could never have stained the calendar of history!

Two things, I am sure, would have resulted in the truth of neither bond nor free being accepted. In the first place, many a king's head would never have been cut off. There should have been no divine-right-bogy to begin with; but if there had, the ruler would have been so just, so wise that his subjects would have loved him instead of being forced to send him to the guillotine. The second result would be witnessed in a better quality of world-citizenship. Loving his own land, each man would be admiringly appreciative of and sincerely grateful for the good in every land. His sympathies would not be insular, but international; he would be not only an American, a Russian, a Frenchman, but a cosmopolite; not a spy,—not a so-called superman, ferreting like a rat in governmental cellars,

but a man of the open day, unweakened by brute might and made strong by heavenly right.

We must apply our principle, finally, to sex. There can be, in the profounder reaches of life and society, no male and no female. Does that mean that men are going to become pettily feminine and women harshly masculine? If so, then men and women, of all created intelligences, are most pitiable. The idea is not, of course, obscuration of sex, but its perfect realization. One of the terms which the Master constantly applied to Himself was Son of Man. As a matter of fact, it has no bearing whatever upon the subject of sex; it simply implies His complete identity with humanity. Nothing that is worthily human can be even slightly foreign to Him. He pulls out all the stops in the manifold organ of humanity, all the lyric strains of feminine tenderness, all the trumpet tones of masculine strength, blends them into one thrilling harmony and sends it love-winged and faith-inspired worshipfully up to the heart of music's God. In Christ alone do the discords of sex melt into the holy co-operations and fuse into the unearthly purposes which produce the unity of a full-toned humanity. A fact, verifiable to any student of history and philosophy, is this: Before Christ assumed the likeness of flesh, the masculine virtues—courage, strength, wisdom, truth—were in the ascendency; but since He came to our planet and went away that He might possess it utterly, the masculine virtues have had to woo

and win the feminine virtues—those white brides of all truly great and richly dowered masculine spirits—meekness, obedience, gentleness, purity, and affection. And the man who has not these, though he has the others in full measure, is only the contour of a man, just a self-nominated candidate for manhood, without the slightest hope of election unless he changes his platform.

Brethren, these principles and thoughts, as old as Christianity and as new as truth, seem especially pertinent just now. Gladstone declared that the history of nations is a melancholy chapter; and he explained his declaration by adding that the history of governments is one of the most immoral parts of human history. Bernhardi admits that Christianity is just and true, but impractical because it begets in men and nations a conflict and contradiction of duties. If the aims of governments are so grossly immoral, as Gladstone said, then the German militarist is right; for Christianity says there must be conflict, deep, unflinching, and to the death, between right and wrong. But inasmuch as governments have tried everything else and failed, is it not worth while to give the politics of the Kingdom of God—racial privileges, governmental rights, the completer co-operations of sex—a real test? In reply, many will quickly rise up to illustrate the truth of the late John Hay's aphorism: "Nature and politicians hate a vacuum." On the other hand, there will be many more, sobered by this un-

speakable crime of murdered millions and plundered lands, believing in a just God and the rights of weak peoples as well as strong, who will first pray John Hay's prayer, and then go forth to enact the spirit of that prayer in its bearing upon nations and individuals:

"Not in dumb resignation we lift our hands on high;
Not like the nerveless fatalist content to do and die;
Our faith springs like the eagle, who soars to meet the sun,
And cries exulting unto Thee, 'O Lord, Thy will be done!'

Thy will—it bids the weak be strong, it bids the strong be just.
No lips to fawn, no hand to beg, no brow to seek the dust.
Whenever man oppresses man beneath the liberal sun,
O Lord, be there! Thine arm make bare! Thy righteous will be done."

VI

THE ONE TOUCH MORE

"Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes."—St. Mark viii : 25.

ONE of the advantages of the New Year is the psychological benefit it affords us in freshening up our spiritual being. We are reminded that, after all, our great task is not so much to succeed in life as to succeed in living. Wordsworth thought men lived by admiration, by hope, by love; and it is certain that for lack of these shining qualities, men inwardly die. The season is propitious, therefore, because it invites us to retire into our deeper, truer selves and consider the timeless, abiding values. One of these values is splendidly hinted in the text, and it is broadly seen in the Master's entire life and ministry. It is that immeasurable value of doing a little more than is actually required, of planning more largely than is in keeping with average human nature, of speaking somewhat more generously than is customary for tongues natively critical. A few Sundays ago, after conducting a vesper service in one of Brooklyn's hospitals, I was taken through the wards by the founder, that we might say a word to the sufferers.

By each bed I noticed a flower, and by way of explanation, my friend said: "Do you see that little flower? Well, it is our custom here to have a flower by each bed when the patient is placed in it. Patients receive flowers from their friends, of course, but we do not want a single patient to wait even a day for a bit of bloom and cheer. And this," he added, gently, "is what we call 'the one touch more.'" Instantly I was back in old Bethsaida looking at a blind man, or else the Master of Bethsaida had come gloriously close to my side! For I found myself repeating: "Then *again* he laid his hands upon his eyes."

I

Is not the one touch more the secret of Christianity? Surely, the wonder of our religion is in its overflow of graciousness, its thrill of the uncatalogued, its utterance of the unlanguaged, its conquest of the added touch. Compared with all other religions, Christianity excels in what it adds, not in what it takes away; in what it fulfils, not in what it destroys; in what it supplies, not in what it suppresses. To-day we frankly recognize the good in other religions; we are not unmindful of what the world owes to Confucianism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, and other faiths. Some of us can recall the time when, if a scintilla of good was discovered in these venerable beliefs, we

thought a direct attack had been made upon the validity of our own religion. Happily, our mood is wiser and more Christlike now. We say: "Yes; there is much that is excellent in ethnic religions. God has never left Himself without witness in any nation. Religion is the noblest aspiration in the heart of man; no people have been without a religion; hence their prophets and teachers. Schoolmasters of the race, they have led their scholars gropingly, ofttimes very crudely and imperfectly, along the dim-lit paths opening into the larger day. What these faiths lack, our own supplies; their imperfection but helps to more fully reveal the completeness of the Christian's faith."

Here, then, we take our stand for the divinity of Christ's revelation: It offers the *one touch more.* In the best sense, ours is not a religion of exclusion, but of inclusion. Other creeds may furnish the first touch and the second; Christianity alone adds the third and final touch of uttermost salvation. Are you a mystic? Christianity contains enough mysticism to satisfy a race of mystics. Are you a pragmatist? Christianity is so practical that, with all its mysticism, there is no hope whatever of understanding it without practising it, doing it up in flesh and blood and sending it forth into the roaring, dusty streets of the everyday. Are you a poet? Well, one angel undertook to tell those shepherds of the Christ-child. But I suppose it was too much for him. Maybe his voice broke, and maybe

all the strings on his harp snapped—I don't know. At any rate, one angel was not enough to sing the Advent song, for "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." But if you are neither a mystic, nor a pragmatist, nor a poet, I know you are a sinner. We are all sinners—that is the horrible, unspeakable indictment of our humanity. Yet, here again, is the one touch more of Christianity: The shame of being a sinner is offset by being saved from sin in Christ Jesus!

But if this law of the added touch is embodied in the Christian system, how wondrously, how heartbreakingly is it seen in the Master's personal relations. Witness the scene from which the text is taken. Here is this blind man—who in that weltering mass of oriental humanity cares anything for a blind man? I fear earth's answer would be disappointing; but Heaven has a big, sweet, tender, golden answer. You ought to dip your voice in tears before attempting to read it: "And He took hold of the blind man by the hand." If you can read that without a kind of sob, my friend, your heart is as hard as marble. Oh, my soul, what is this! Methinks angels are hiding behind their wings, the silence of awe is on their lips, as they gaze on this new world's wonder. The Hand that hammered out the stars and set them in their places has clasped the hand of a blind man! The Hand that nestles the

seas in its hollow, teaching them now to roar in awful harmony and now to sigh with infinite yearning—ah, me! that Hand is leading a sightless man out of the village! He who walks the worlds and the eternities knows how to keep step with a poor, halting, eyeless human! But the wonder is not yet. True, He took him by the hand and led him forth, touching those dead eyes. Already the man can see somewhat—men as trees, walking. But that is not enough for the Master; He must yet add that touch of tender grace, that fine, rich, wordless, beautiful something—sweet as a flower by a sick man's bed; white as mother-love, stealing into the daughter's room and kissing the fair sleeping girl that on the morrow will be a bride; artless as the child coming out of the Vast Unseen into our noises, and then toddling back again into the heavens with a merry peal of lyric laughters, while we stand looking up, thinking "unworded things and old." Or, take the case of the nameless woman. That day the Master came to the temple in the early morning. While He was teaching, heartless men drag this soiled creature into His presence. Her crime, said these men, must be expiated by stoning. "But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground." Moses added a pile of stones to such as she; but Jesus added the Divine Forgiveness, making the sweet flowers of her girlhood bloom amid the desolate wastes of life; for her blasted noonday and the dread oncoming night, Jesus gave

her back her lost morning, all bright with dewy hopefulness and rhythmic with music of warblers whose songs were hushed long ago. Finally, the Master's one touch more—the unfading bouquet He set forever by humanity's sinsick bedside—is seen on Calvary. It was not enough that He carried His own cross; not enough that He spoke comforting words to the women of Jerusalem; not enough that, from His place of pain, He gave His mother into the knightly keeping of his best-loved disciple. No! This manifestation of Godhead, veiled in flesh, demands one final privilege: He makes a pillow of hope upon which a social outcast may rest his dying head! Even while the sun puts on sackcloth and goes mourning down his darkened circuit, this God, out of His agony and blood, speaks: "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." I know not where Paradise is—whether in the north of space, or the south of space, or the east of space, or the west of space; or whether its fragrant gardens may be fenced within the immeasurable ranges of the soul itself; or whether it is the spirit's final cleansing room, stainless and pure with the unceasing flow of the water of life, before entering into the Many-Mansioned House. But this I know: It will be most sweet and lovely, even more than mind can think, or imagination can picture, or dreams can dream, to look upon the Face that was marred, the Hand that was pierced, the Saviour who forgot

Himself, even in death, that He might add the one touch more to an unworthy, but penitential, life. It is such a Lord as this that makes John Donne's three-hundred-year-old prayer-song as new as the breath of morning:

"Wilt Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When Thou hast done, Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself, that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as He shines now, and heretofore;
And having done that, Thou hast done,
I fear no more."

II

Does not the one touch more explain the vitality of truly great institutions? Think of that complex institution called government. Broadly speaking, there are two theories of human government—the monarchical and the republican. Between these two outstanding and opposite ideals there are, of

course, minor conceptions; but these two have been the agelong contestants. Concerning the first, Bernhardi says: "In view of the superiority of the monarchical over the republican form of government, it is our duty to uphold the monarchical idea." In its aggravated form, the monarchical theory says: "The state is everything—a vast, soulless machine, in which men are so many cogs. Therefore, raise men to the highest power of efficiency that they may become the tools, not the servants, of the state; and the head and soul of the state is vested in one man through the accident of primogeniture. His word is final; he is a sacred person; the king can do no wrong." Standing squarely opposed to this theory is the republican—"government of the people, by the people, and for the people." It says: "Men are servants of the state, not its slaves. The word of the ruler is final only when it is right; he may do wrong, and just as surely as he does, the people will correct him; his person is sacred only if clothed in robes of righteousness, and not because some dead ancestor got hold of the crown, which his descendants have worn ever since." Americans uphold the republican form of government because they believe it to be dynamically democratic, and not autocratic; because it retains the good qualities of the monarchy and leaves out its incorrigible evils. But forgetting, for the moment, the superiority or inferiority of the two systems, does not the present international murder forever doom and damn the

ethics of government which says: "What is confessedly wrong between man and man, may somehow be right between nation and nation; or, as the chief exponent of militarism says: 'Christian morality is based on the law of love. This law can claim no significance for the relation of one country to another, since its application would lead to a conflict of duties." Is it not such absurd thinking as this that has led to the present inhuman doing among the nations? Evidently, it is time for governments to add the one touch more. Having tried everything else and failed, why not give Christianity a chance? It will lay its strong, tender, healing hands upon these blind giants and lead them forth from their national villages into the ample places of international cosmopolitanism.

Here, also, is the secret of great schools. Behind every true school stands a true man, and in that man is something finer, larger, more far-reaching than anything to be found in the course of study. It is this that distinguishes Mark Hopkins as one of America's foremost educators. Parents sent their boys to Williams College and—Mark Hopkins. The college was the noble school's body, but Mark Hopkins was its heart and soul. While other teachers opened the boys' eyes somewhat, the President did something else—he made them open their eyes in wonder and awe. When Arnold's name was presented for the headmastership of Rugby, it was

predicted that, if elected, he would transform the face of education throughout the public schools of England. And he did it. Some men are remembered for their work; other men are remembered for their work and for themselves. Great as their works are, they are greater still. And here we come upon the secret of Arnold's charm. As Percival says, he was a prophet among schoolmasters, rather than an educator in the common use of the term. The stimulating streams of life flowing from his magnetic personality produced a heavy crop of men among English hills and valleys. He had his Aristotle, his Thucydides, his Niebuhr at his intellectual fingers'-end; but he had, also, the richness and charm of godliness so focused in his personality that he emitted goodness and character as a live coal emits sparks. Thus it is that Arnold and Rugby have become synonymns for each other. But, to come nearer home, what is the memorable quality in the teachers who most influenced you? Giving you the elements of an education, as it was their plain, unvarnished duty to do, did they not add something else to your Latin, Greek, French, German, and mathematics? Were not their lives melodious with tones of the everlasting chime? In my study are the faces of two men. They are great teachers, supreme trainers of youth for college and university. Their standard of scholarship is the highest, but their standard of character is higher still. Boys passing through the great Webb School

carry into life something that was not in the curriculum, something that could not be packed into the curriculum, and yet something nobly formative and predominating in their lives. Who that ever heard them, can forget sayings such as these: "Boys, don't do things on the sly;" or, "Boys, don't be jealous; for jealousy is a confession of inferiority." All schools worthy of the name are apostles of the one touch more!

Moreover, we have here the law that transfigures business. We are altogether too familiar with the pure dollar basis of business—so many hours, so much pay. But men are slowly learning that a business concern of this type cannot be a truly great business concern. And why? Because it lacks the goodwill, the mutual respect, the common interest, the brothering spirit that must exist between employers and employés. Now, there is no solution, in Heaven or in earth, of the tremendous problems of capital and labour save this spirit of added graciousness. In the last analysis, human nature will respond to no other treatment, no matter whether it is human nature represented in the capitalist or human nature represented in the labourer. Essentially, commerce is founded on a moral centre; to ignore that centre is to implore anarchy; but to operate from that centre is to conduct business greatly and to receive, at the same time, the priceless dividends of an enlarged manhood. Let me tear, in passing, this page out of the book of a

human life. My friend has a splendid business; he is a large employer of men. He knows his men—not simply in the mass, but individually, man by man. One morning an employé was missed from his accustomed place. "Where is Charles today?" the head of the firm asked. On being told that Charles was seriously ill, he at once made arrangements for him to have medical care, a trained nurse, and everything that would minister to his comfort. "Splendid!" you say, "and just as it ought to be." But hold on, my friend, that is only the beginning, not the ending, of this epic in business: As long as Charles was ill, this princely man went, week in and out, to visit him in person. He did not ring that humble door-bell by proxy; he rang it with his own hand. Oh, yes, he touched him once—he gave him employment; oh, yes, he touched him twice—he sent a doctor and a nurse to take care of him; but oh, yes, he touched him a third time—he went himself and sat by his bed and held his hand and smoothed his brow! "Inasmuch"—but let men and angels hear the rest in the Day of Days!

III

Finally, this law of the one touch more contains the ultimate fineness of the soul. "Everything good," said Plato, "we can educe from beautiful souls by trust and frankness." And to grow beautiful souls is the mission of these checkered human

years, the unfolding of that wondrous history which Leibnitz defined as the romance of humanity. Nowhere, it seems to me, is Christ's Lordship more manifest than in this: His Spirit, in men and women, urges them to such altruistic planning, such noble thinking, such generous doing that they are not content with anything short of the added touch. They breast the silver seas of goodness as gulls breast the crystal waters of New York Bay; and just as the bay proclaims the overflowing abundance of the sea, so do mightily tender souls proclaim their contact with the infinite oceans of grace flowing out from the Christ's unfathomed heart. Recalling this spirit and faith in the first disciples, Martineau says: "Within the infinitude of the divine mercy trouble did but fold them closer; the perversity of man did but provide them to put forth a more conquering love; and though none were ever more the sport of the selfish interests and prejudices of mankind, or came into contact with a more desolate portion of the great wastes of humanity, they constructed no melancholy theories; but having planted many a rose of Sharon, and made their little portion of the desert smile, departed in the faith that the green margin would spread as the seasons of God came round, till the mantle of heaven covered the earth, and it ended with Eden, as it had begun." And what this great philosopher says of the first disciples, may be said of all true disciples everywhere and all the time. "Do what you will,"

said Robert Elsmere, "you cannot escape Jesus of Nazareth. His life and death underlie our institutions as the alphabet underlies our literature." It is grandly true; and especially do Christ's life and death underlie magnanimous souls. Brooke Foss Westcott was one of the great scholars of his time. But it was the one touch more, his disinterested public services on behalf of rich and poor, which won for him the title: "*Everybody's Bishop.*" Yet I like to set over against such a conspicuously great and good life—not for invidious comparison so much as for spiritual variety—this humble woman whom I never saw, and yet to whose regal goodness I owe one of the abiding inspirations of life. She is a household servant; she lives beyond the seas; she is a Christian—that is her everlasting distinction. On stated evenings it is her duty to remain in the home, and her pastor learned that she spends those evenings in a most original way. "You know I cannot do much," she said. "But I long to do something toward healing the sin and sorrow of the world. So, on the evenings when I cannot go out, I take the daily paper to my room. Then I cut out the obituary notices and pray for those who sorrow for their dead." Ah! whenever you see a piece of crepe during this New Year, whenever you see a hearse, just remember this unknown woman's example, and you may be the means of drying many tears by causing God's golden winds to blow softly down from His Hills of Healing.

One Sabbath day, in a place of pain,
Where broken men are brothers all,
Fell such a sweetly healing strain,
As only from Love's Height may fall.

Beside each bed a vase was set,
And in each vase a golden rose,—
Sweet sign that Man and God had met
Where Love Divine most richly glows!

As we went among the faces pale,
O'er which deep pain had left its score,
The Surgeon said: "Each rose breathes a tale
Of what we call 'the one touch more.'

"Our sick have all science can give
In skill and knowledge, which is power;
Yet something else do they receive
In the bloom of this little flower."

Oh, noble Heart! oh, knightly Soul!
Thine is the gift angels adore:
Heal thou men's bodies, make them whole,
But add—like God—*The One Touch More!*

VII

RELIGION AS LIFE

"Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me; and ye will not come to me, that ye may have life."—St. John v: 39, 40.

THE sooner we get at the soul of a text like this, the better it will be for all of us. The big realities ask no introduction. Who would think of introducing a sunrise? When the day fades out that the night may come in with all its jewelry of stars, does any one get up and say: "Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to present the orator of this occasion—the eloquent, knowledge-showing Night?" Surely, the just and holy night would swallow him alive! When did June ever say: "Please introduce me to the good green earth?" Why, June and the sky-pregnant sod seem to have known each other always, from their far-off, antique childhood. Does the Atlantic, ever old and ever young, need an introduction? The ocean prefers to be enjoyed—to be a path for the ships that leave no tracks; to be a liquid face for the sun to kiss; to be a watery street up and down which the nations come and go. No; the truly great re-

quires no introduction. All it seeks is a chance to reveal its heart, utter its word, give its life, yield up its love. And to say that this text is truly great is like saying the sun is hot, the wind is cold, the night is dark, the day is bright. We simply play with its words until we cut into its spirit, and allow the two-edged sword of its power to cleave our spiritual joints and marrows in twain. The Master is talking of religion as life. What are some of its obstacles? And what is its everlastingly enriching secret? Why will man carry a tombstone when he may wear wings? Why will he feed upon dust and ashes when he may have the food used at angelic banquetings? These are some of the questions for our consideration.

I

One of the hindrances to a larger realization of the Christian life is: An improper use of the Scriptures. "Ye search the scriptures," said the Master, "because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me." Evidently, Christ discerned a serious mistake somewhere. Is the fault, then, with the Scriptures, and does Jesus so imply? By no means. None had so lofty an insight into the divine library as the Master. What grandeur, what pity, what pathos, what tragedy, what history, what prophecy, what psalmody, what agony of despair, what symphony of

hope, what deep-down inspirations and high-up trailing glories He beheld therein! The Master knew that the Scriptures were instinct with divine love; that the God who wrote His omnipotence in star-letters upon the scrolls of space, wrote His heart in moving compassion upon these pages of inspiration. The Scriptures are humanity's sob of defeat over sin; they are also humanity's assured triumph in the God of marvelous deliverances. They assert that while man bears in his heart the poison of the serpent's fang, he is yet in league with that "bright mastership" of divinity which brings him off more than conqueror. A daisy is the sun's writing in shorthand; a field of whispering corn is the sun's writing in longhand; but both the daisy and the cornfield are the signatures of the same sun. But whose is the signature of the sun? When there was no star, no sun, no day, no night, "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." And with the advent of humanity, God began to signal to man, to woo his vision from the clods to the Creator of the worlds, to the Father of spirits. As lawgiver, ruler, prophet, teacher, or singer came by turns down the highways of history—each telling his dream, each articulating his hope, each voicing his experience, each expressing his faith—there came into existence these writings known as the Hebrew Scriptures. They need no apology, no defence. Their permanence is in the fact that they were written by God-intoxicated men. Their se-

curity, as well as their sublimity, is in the keeping of their Author. The wind of God's breath blows through them. Their title deed to inspiration is their power to inspire. These old Scriptures, bright with the morning glow of eternity, are the best that God could do, with flesh and blood for His instruments.

How, then, had scribes and Pharisees misused them? Just as many a man has since done—by a downright wooden, mechanical, unspiritual interpretation of them. "Ye search the scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life." What right had they to think that eternal life is in the Scriptures? Eternal life is in the Christ of God, and nowhere else. Before the Scriptures were, God was; before the New Testament was written in words the Saviour of the world wrote out His salvation in letters of blood and deeds of love. The Scriptures are the guideposts to life; the Scriptures are the road; they say: "Behold Him, the Giver, the Imparter of Life Eternal. We are the symbols; He is the reality. Break through the shell of our words and feed upon His very Self, His own nourishing breasts of goodness and beauty." Travelling in the country, you come to a point where several roads intersect. You wish to reach the city yonder in the distance. But you do not know which road to take. Just then you see a man who knows, and you ask: "Which road leads into the city?" He replies: "That one." But as

you journey along the right road, you do not once say: "This road and the city yonder are one and the same." No! The road is the means; the city is the end. You might stop on the road until doomsday and never reach the city. Just so, says our Lord, are the Scriptures. They are the path, the guideposts, the witness to Me. But the Pharisees sat down in the road, killed off all the spiritual greenness on either side, and never got within sight of the glittering spires of the City of Reality. "And ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." Is not that a misuse of the Scriptures indeed? And any man who reads his Bible, without going beyond the written words to the Saviour of whom they tell, is simply a Pharisee living two thousand years later than his religious ancestors in old Jerusalem. Study your Bible; make it the man of your council; commit it to memory; teach it to others; feed upon it morning, noon, and night. But always remember, because very good people sometimes forget it, that the supreme purpose of the Bible is to bring you into first-hand, heart-to-heart, spirit-to-spirit communion and fellowship with God. Thus you may enjoy unbroken inflows of fresh new wonder, while eternity's ancient fire burns clean and deep in your heart.

A further obstacle to religion as life is the quest after false Messiahs. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him will ye receive." Man's

capacity for choosing the inferior is immense. Scholars tell us that, first and last, the Jews have gone after some sixty odd Messiahs. Is there a more pathetic sight in all history? Perhaps not; but its nearest counterpart is the wild chase after false teachers. Yet this is not peculiar to our own age; it is germane to human nature, which has an agelessness altogether its own. What is the cause of this game of semi-spiritual-hide-and seek? Underlying it all, of course, is the truth that man is incurably religious. Mortals must worship something. Then, woven in with this ineradicable religious streak, is a fatal genius for the second best. In morals, as nowhere else, are men so prone to seek the line of least resistance. Thus the religious quack finds his market steady and high; his soil is ever ready for the sowing. The patentees of a new religion are assured of a brief, bubble-bursting success. They recall Northcote's story of the violin teacher of George III. The master told his majesty that violinists fall into one of three classes: first, those who cannot play at all; second, those who play very badly; third, those who play very well. "It is my privilege," he added, "to assure his majesty that he belongs to the second class." Whereat the king turned purple with pride. It is to this "second class" of religious fiddlers that the devotees of the modern cults belong. But where do the masters and mistresses thereof come in? That is another matter. Its gravity must not be over-

looked because its crime is heinous. They are the sheep in wolf's clothing; they are the leaders, as Professor Münsterburg says, of the "religious underworld;" they are the "hirelings" that traffic in souls; they are the priests and priestesses who verify the truth of De Foe's rhyme:

> "Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
> The devil always builds a chapel there;
> And 'twill be found upon examination
> The latter has the largest congregation."

Another obstacle to religion as life is social and individual self-glorification. "How can ye believe, who receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?" It was a poignant question for these children of Abraham. Elected to fulfil the mightiest task of any race, they had degenerated into religious automatons. Their privileges had stiffened into pride; and pride is a knife that cuts the moral throat while it jabs out the spiritual eyes. Consequently, these gaunt old Pharisees, wrapped in their moth-eaten mantles of self-pride, were bleeding to death in their blindness, and they knew not that they were religiously bloodless and sightless. The nation that worships itself—its ancestry, its attainments, whether religious, artistic, or scientific, or its material things, however worthful and essential to social progress—that nation has already prepared for its obsequies, and is simply marking time while

the national undertaker arrives. But society is composed of individuals. Single persons are the stuff of which the social garment is woven; and the whole cloth can be no better than its inwrought stitches. Therefore, the vanity of the individual is treason to the brotherhood. How can a man believe in the only God when he worships himself? As mere pulpit cleverness is disastrous to the preacher's unction, so self-idolatry is destructive of the layman's reality. It is this personal tawdriness, this self-glorying that is inimical to spiritual susceptibility. Going up Fifth Avenue the other day, I saw a man at whom some laughed and others wept. He was looking at himself every step he took. Was he not a fine specimen of physical manhood? Was he not handsome, richly dressed, graceful of movement? Indeed he was! But, ah me! He could not keep his eyes off himself. He carried no tangible looking-glass, yet he was hung with invisible mirrors. And his vain, steady gaze at himself, translated into our vernacular, said: "I really wonder if the universe, if the planet named earth, and that insignificant part of it called New York, is up-to-date enough to be aware of my presence?" He could not see anything, hear anything, think anything, imagine anything apart from his own empty-headed, shallow-hearted self-consciousness. Is it not unspeakably pathetic? Until one shifts his imperfect personality over into the glowing centres of the personal heart of that

paternal "Other" bearing witness to the Christ, he plods the dusty, shrunken ways of life, the shriveled victim of unspiritual drought, with no hope of sweet celestial rains turning the parched lands of his soul into flowering gardens of wondrous bloom.

But the greatest obstacle to religion as life is yet to be mentioned. It is an unholy will. "Ye *will* not." Religiously speaking, ignorance slays its thousands, prejudice its tens of thousands, while desperately wicked, wilful wrong-headedness slays its millions. The most awe-inspiring thing in the universe, next to God, is the human will. God calls the stars, and they answer from all the shining fields of space: "Here we are." God calls the atoms, and because each atom knows its place and seeks it, all the atomic galaxies reply: "We have heard thy Voice, O God, and are coming to Thee." God calls the seas, and they respond in plangent, plunging tones: "Thy waves and thy billows are all leaping to nestle in the hollow of Thy hand." God calls the mountains, and they climb skyward in obedience to the inner urge of the Voice that spake them into being. God calls trees, flowers, animals, and all march in a procession of beauty and a mystery of life, saying: "Thou art our Creator, and we, in unison with dragons and all deeps, with fire and hail and snow and stormy wind, delight in fulfilling thy word." But God calls you—an immortal being, a deathless soul, a creature quivering with the image of Godhead, a clod thrilling with immeasurable

might, a shadow flying on invisible wings, a hand-breadth spanning time and eternity, a fascinating tale that can never, never be told, a casket of divinity self-plunged into a sty of iniquity—and you answer that God who is calling you, calling in mercy, calling in judgment, calling by night, calling by day: "*I will not.*" Is it not enough to appall even the Almighty? In this sense, at least, you are the creator of your own destiny. Your will is the door through which God enters your house of life. Have you shut the door—bolted it, barred it, locked it fast? Open it now! You, and you only, know the combination to that safe in which the jewels of your soul are kept. God is hungry for you. O, feed Him the food of obedience! God is thirsty for you. O, give Him to drink of the waters of thy spirit! God is longing for you! O, run home to His heart! For "there are but two things in the universe," said John Henry Newman, "your own soul and God who made it." There is in God "a deep, but dazzling darkness," which will turn your spiritual night into eternal day.

II

Turning now from all obstacles, what is the secret of religion as life? What is the creative power that makes for spiritual vastness on the human side? How is one to leave negative restraints for positive, dynamic assistance unto religious vitality? There

must be unquestionable certainty here, or else life itself is a huge joke, a taunting jest. Indeed, is it credible that such minute provision has been made for constellations and molecules, for winds and seas, for things that creep and things that fly, for all of man's bodily appetites and necessities, and yet, in the highest concern of all—the satisfaction of the soul's hungers and thirsts—there is no clear-aired certainty, no steady solar light beating upon the path that winds ever to the perfect day? Such a thing is utterly unthinkable to right-thinking men. Wrong-thinking men say otherwise; but their own hopeless croaking, as well as their dry-as-dust existence, is the unanswerable argument that their thinking is wrong and their words foolish and empty. We know in part, but we *know*. This is the assurance whose goldenness gathers increasing refulgence to all brave-hearted Christian pilgrims. Does the surgeon need to draw all the blood in your body to know what your blood is? A few ruddy drops are enough. Does the physicist journey all the way to the sun to find out what its elements are? He prefers to stay at home and question the light of a parlor match. The match-head is the prophet of the sun. This tiny flame which his baby's breath may quench tells the man who can hear what the light in the million-miled sun is. The surgeon knows in part, but he knows; the astronomer knows in part, but he knows; the Christian knows in part, also, but he knows—knows as

the materialist, the muck-raker, cannot possibly know. His knowledge is even more valid than is the expert's knowledge of physical things, because he knows "the God of things as they are," the God of souls as they are, and the God of souls as they are going to be. How does one come into this knowledge? What part does a man play? What is the Christian's revealing secret?

The first step is a willing will. Drop out that brazen, life-sapping negative in the Master's statement, and what have you? Nothing less than one of the overwhelming spiritual facts. "Ye *will* come to me!" That instant a man begins to live in a new universe. The power that says no, the will that stubbornly shuts itself out from reality, is the very same that lets itself in to joy and peace and power. There is no quarrel between God's sovereignty and man's freedom. They are two halves of one spiritual whole. Religion is the interaction of your will with the will of God, the interplay of your own soul with the Soul of the Universe, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. When a man says "I will" to God all Heaven thrills with gladness. The New Testament reveals a creative power in the human will which neither psychology nor philosophy nor science can explore or explain. Its responsibility is too heavy, its mystery is too profound, its issues are too far-reaching for adequate measurement. Will is the dreadful price we have to pay for being human. In a

popular book entitled, "The Miracles of Science," the author discusses the origin of the world, charting the universe, weighing the planets, exploring the atom, juggling with life, the creation of species, mastering the microbe, banishing the plagues, the conquest of time and space, and other important subjects. But where is the man who can write a satisfactory account of "The Miracles of the Human Will"? To be sure, in the book referred to there are some slight illustrations of its power and achievement. But these are only parts of the ways of the will; the full thunder of its power who can understand? No mortal surely. Yet the man possessing the deepest vision of the will's stupendous power is the man who has direct, self-chosen dealings with its Creator. The only truly original soul is the soul that lives in the living God. There are brilliant minds that dance with atoms and stars, but they feed only upon the mechanical energy that whirls the little and the large through space. There are other minds that weigh these same lumps of matter, find them wanting in spiritual nutrition, cleave a pathway through their monstrous mass, and walk quietly in behind them to feed upon the Bosom that feeds angels and men. "Worship is the source of all originality," says Professor Cabot, "because it sends us to our origin." This is simply the twentieth century putting of the all-century truth: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God,

or whether I speak from myself." "He shall know"—he shall neither quibble, nor guess, nor whine. He shall know, and walk the big eternal ways with immortal lures calling him ever on. He shall know, and smile with April's silver rain and weep with October's golden ruin. He shall know, and the little jingling noises will patter beneath his feet while the large enchanting whispers murmur in his heart. He shall know, and his good right hand of brotherhood will take unto itself an enlarging clasp. He shall know, and keep his vision clear without speck and his "inner eye unblind." He shall know, and breast the fires of pain only to find rarer lustres when the flames have all died out. He shall know, and grow younger as he grows older, stronger as he becomes weaker, richer as he becomes poorer. He shall know, and the seeming ways of death shall become the gleaming ways of life and light. He shall know, and on the fragrant side of the valley of shadows he shall hear the tender lutany of harpers eternally young sending back to him his own pilgrim chant: "I said, I will water my best garden, and will water abundantly my garden bed; and lo, my brook became a river, and my river became a sea."

Yes; God hangs the earth upon nothing, but he hangs destinies upon that invisible hinge named the human will. Deity can manage His worlds, but He asks your consent to help you manage your life. And the life you are morally and deathlessly re-

sponsible for are the acts of your own will. Verily, the universe is a rubbish heap compared with a mortal immortal's volitional powers. A creative music goes singing along all the paths of space when one says: "I will arise and go now to my Father's house. Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Here is the wonder on the other side of which wonder there is none. It was enough to fill Kant with awe; and it is enough, also, to fulfil all law, human and divine. "So act," said the German, "as if the maxim of thy action were by thy will to become a universal law." Great words and glorious! "So act," said the Master of men, "that thou mayest know that thy action is at one with the will of my Father; and when you stand in His presence from whom the earth and the seas have fled away and galaxies have become blackened cinders, you shall hear the well-done of all well-doing souls."

A willing will! It is the climax of human grandeur! And why? Because a willing will is the only way to discover the living Christ. "Ye will come to Me!" Our Lord drives us into close quarters that He may carve out a generous space for us to live and move in. Come to what? The Scriptures? The Church? The Pope, the Priest, the Preacher? The last new book? Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest—a thousand times no! "You—come—through—these—to—ME!" Many are

spiritually lean because they have never reached the other and living side of the venerable and noble Christian symbols. The means of grace are very, very good, and most essential, but grace is infinitely better than its means. Men are not likely to reach the grace without the divinely ordained means; but men should not swallow the means and nibble at the grace. To stop the millionth part of a spiritual inch this side of Christ is to cheat our souls of what is due them. Returning to your home from church this morning, you will not sit down very long in your parlour, will you? By common consent, you are all dining-room pilgrims. You will neither tarry nor rest until you reach that promised land of the inner man. But suppose there is one who enters his dining-room, beholds the table groaning with delicious food, sits down and asks a blessing, and then—*mirabile dictu!*—does not eat a single bite! What's the dining-room for? For food. What's the table for? For food. What's the food for? To be eaten, of course. "O foolish man," you say, "to have everything good to eat, and yet to remain hungry." But, after all, is he one whit more foolish than those who have the Scriptures, the Church, the Ministry, this glory-drenched world in which no two snowflakes are alike and in which every soul is different from every other soul, and yet falls short of the living Christ? Men who mope about looking for a dead Christ will go moping all their days. There is not room

in time and space for a dead Christ, and yet the universe itself is not spacious enough to hold the living Christ. Behold, the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, He runs from sky to sky, eternity is the breath of His nostrils, the sundown heavens catch fire from the brightness of His face and burn to molten ruins through all the wide-winged west, and soon the April world, with its young grasses and opening buds and bursting throats, will turn our planet into a pulpit, saying: "He hath plucked the sting from death; He hath chained the grave to His chariot wheels; He hath gone up on high, and all the gates of glory opened at His coming; He who hath made all things beautiful hath coined Himself into beauty for the world; He hath led captivity captive and given gifts to men."

Religion as life includes a willing will and the living Christ. There is a final step—the result of it all—and that is deathless life. "Ye will come to me"—what for?—"that ye may have life." Now, mere existence may be written in a wounded past tense and a limping present; but life—rich, unfailing, ever-deepening life—is an eternal now. "This is life eternal"—on either side the grave, in the body or out of the body, fenced in by matter or lifted beyond the choking clutch of matter, anywhere, in any world, for ever and ever—"this is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Here it is, my friend, the biggest, sweetest, gladdest

secret at the centre of the worlds. Christ hath plucked out the heart of the great mystery. He fulfils the world-old dreams, hopes, aspirations; they all come winging forth to sun themselves in the light of His glory. Is it not life for which we pant? Here it is—wonderful, glorious, unutterable! Why, you may have words as lustrous as the shining colours in imagination's loom, and your words are too weak to express the smallest part of the soul's higher enchantments. Interfused with the divine reality, his spirit pulsing with eternal life, a man may lean over the edge of space and learn no new wonder. For the inner facts of the ultimate have beckoned to him. To miss them is to toss stars away and toy with gewgaws. Loving what God loves, he hates what God hates. For no man can have a supernal love for the supreme and not have a terrible scorn for the superficial. To have this love of love and hate of hate is to be alive; to have it not is to be dead. But because you may be spiritually dead, do not slander the universe by calling it a graveyard. O, plunge into the thrilling tides of being! Come where Heaven's refreshing billows are, where woven calms smite the harp-strings of the soul as softly as tinkling bells twirling lyric tunes out of the unspoken silences. Wake up! Be made alive! Love, laugh, weep, work, sigh—be anything, but don't be dead! Just to be alive, and hug a living world, throwing your grateful arms about its

soft-green neck; just to be alive, and walk the kindly, brothering ways; just to be alive, and know that the world is one vast red Calvary which Joseph's garden touches to immortal bloom; just to be alive, and to feel that you are going to be more and more alive forever—is it not enough to make you aware of the music behind "the creaking of the tented sky, the ticking of Eternity"?

VIII

GOD'S USE OF AFFLICTION

"And as he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."—St. John ix: 1, 2, 3.

"WHO sinned?" It is one of the old, old questions of man. Sin is such a gruesome factor in our race, ranging so wide, cutting so deep, hurting so many, that the Jew beheld this dark assassin hiding in the background of every calamity, of every sorrow, of every sickness. And there is so much authority in human experience for the ancient Jew's viewpoint, that men do well to pause before filing a single bill of exceptions. But that bill has been filed, and by no mere man. It was the Christ who breaks the power of sin, who cleanses from the guilt of sin, who saves from sin—it was this Christ who said that all of life's afflictions are not due to sin, that there are exceptions to this all but universal cause of human suffering. But the disciples thought there was no exception; and when they saw the man blind from his birth, they asked: "Rabbi, who sinned,

this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" He is blind; therefore, he sinned, or else his parents sinned before him—that is their viewpoint. Christ's answer, in its large suggestiveness and manifold implications, is one of the grandest utterances that ever came from His wisdom-speaking lips. It reveals His profound consciousness of world-mysteries; it shows His insight into those unexplored remainders constantly coming into the human foreground out of half-lights and shadows too deep for thought; it manifests His comprehension of a problem that haunts the wise man and the ignorant, the ancient world and the modern; and it throws a kindly light upon the question of human affliction and God's use of it. So, in our study, let us give the term affliction its widest meaning.

I

Suppose we begin our inquiry close to the roots of the disciples' problem, as well as the world's vast problem—the problem of sin. Now, in order to sin, you must have a sinner; you must have a will choosing that which is wrong; a heart and mind giving hospitality to those spiritual tramps which have no place on the highways of right. Well, this much is certain: You do not have to go very far to find such a man or woman. Like the Master, as you pass by, going your various ways in life, you may easily see these sinningly blind

people from their birth. They have never truly visioned the beauty of holiness; their heart-eyes have never beheld the awfulness of goodness; their souls have never been consciously stirred by the creative power of that new and second birth which leagues us in with God and Christ and conquest, making life, as Amiel said, to be a perpetual achievement. Like the philosopher's cave men, they are sitting with their backs to the light. They have no eastern windows, no dew-drenched morning, no heavenly greenness.

Now what is your personal attitude toward this terrible affliction named sin—sin not as a theory, sin not as a theologic doctrine, but sin as a destructive, blinding, killing power in human life? Your attitude may be that of the disciples. "Who did sin," you may ask, "these people or their spiritual ancestors, mayhap in some previous state of existence, that they should be born blind?" And then you may go nonchalantly on your speculative way, yourself stupidly blind to one of the bewildering riddles of the universe. But you may also choose the second and nobler alternative, manifesting the very spirit of the Master. "Why are these multitudes, my friends, my acquaintances, blind and sinful?" you may say. "I cannot answer all of my own question, of course. It involves too many mysteries, a world in the making, heredity, the tremendous problem of evil—these and a thousand questions I cannot answer. But of this much I am

absolutely sure: Here is my spiritual opportunity; the works of God's redeeming grace may be made manifest in them through me; I will tell them of the all-glorious Saviour; then they, too, may be able to say with the man no longer blind: 'One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.'"

Let me say again: Sin is no mere make-believe; no game of blind-man's buff; none but fools make a mock at sin. Oh, never apologize for sin; never minimize the horror of sin—at least not until Gethsemane and Calvary and humanity's raging inner hells have been blotted from the map of the spiritual universe. Yet does not the horror of sin manifest the exceeding glory of the Christ's forgiveness? Herein doth God manifest His works in the supreme reaches of reality. Rightly conceived, God's redemption in Christ dwarfs all of God's other achievements. It leads us in behind the rind of matter that we may see the operations of Spirit, that we may behold the beating of the Divine Heart as He pumps His crimson, cleansing tides of health through the moral sicknesses of the race. Then follows another question: What higher, diviner, more delicate work is there in all God's world than that one immortal mortal should tell his brother immortal mortal of the Saviour from sin? You will find no higher work than this, my friend. You may tunnel under the rivers; you may fly through the air on mechanical wings; you

may pile stone and steel dizzily high; you may weigh the stars and count the atoms; you may amass wealth until your fingers are stained with gold and your hearts are harder than silver dollars; you may lay up knowledge until every cell in your brain records cold, colourless facts with the accuracy of a register counting cash. But until you wake up to the privilege of helping God help men realize the Saviourhood of Christ Jesus, you can never know how trivial, in comparison, even otherwise important things are. Ah! here is the true human career—a Christianity uncorrupted by atrophied professionalism; a life as fresh as spring grasses, as songful as spring birds, as undecaying as the never old, ever new enchantments of spring. Why, then, are all these sinners by the side of my road through life? Did their parents, did their ancestors sin, that they should be born blind sinners? Answer frankly: "I do not know; Plato may be wrestling with that problem in some academy beyond the skies; but this much I do know: God's works of salvation may be manifest in my brother men through me. Thus I am resolved to help God, to help them, to help myself!"

II

Another very practical application of our principle is made possible by the lonely lives all around us. We shall miss, I fear, the larger and deeper aspects

of human loneliness if we confine our thinking to any particular class. And yet, just because there is so much ground for so doing, we begin at once to classify. We think of the loneliness of the young man who has but recently come to the city; we think of the young woman who is striving, against terrible odds, to make an honest living while she keeps her soul clean; we think of the poor, who experience the sting of wintry winds and the blight of summer diseases; we think of the aged, the infirm, the disappointed, the defeated—a mighty host who are acceptable soldiers in the army of the lonely. But is there not a kind of democracy, a tone of universality in human loneliness, that emphatically forbids our applying it to one class or the other? Some of the loneliest folk I have ever known were not poor, but rich; they were not in ill health, but physically sound; they were not ignorant, but brilliantly educated; they were not social outcasts, but social favourites. It is quite true that they undertook the transaction of the heavy business of life on a meager spiritual capital; but is not this simply an additional reason why they should not be ostracized from the weaponless ranks of the lonely?

But let us close the debate, and get down to facts. God is a social Being; we live in a social universe; therefore, man must have the companionship of God on the one hand and the fellowship of man on the other, if he is to realize the ends for which he has

been created. "A man," says Emerson, "does not tie his shoe without recognizing laws which bind the farthest regions of nature: moon, plant, gas, crystal, are concrete geometry and numbers." And there is a spiritual geometry, in the dullest as well as in the brightest life, that is infinitely more wonderful than anything to be found in the daring science of mathematics. Your theorem, my theorem, is this: Given the reality of lonely people all about us, how is it possible that the works of God may be made manifest in them? Well, go to that inexperienced young man, far from home and among strangers, and make him feel that he has suddenly come into a tingling atmosphere of brotherliness. I tell you God will work a miracle of comradeship before your very eyes. O woman, seek out that girl who wets her pillow with tears of loneliness night after night. Give her the kindly feel of a sistering soul. I tell you that God will manifest a work of such spiritual beauty then and there, that angels will be telling each other about it long after monuments have become atoms of dust whirled around on the wings of the wind. Visit the family who reside on Poverty Alley. Take them bread and clothing and gold, and do not leave God behind. Of course, God will be there before you, He will be there with you, He will be there after you; but what I mean is—make them feel your personal faith in a personal God. Let not the brilliance of your humanitarianism obscure the

splendour of the divine redemption. Do this for Christ, and I tell you that you shall know the joy of doing some of the greater works which He has left you here in this world to do. The fact that you are here; the fact that you are in an open and not a closed universe; the fact that you are part of an unfinished and not a finished world—these and a thousand voices are saying that God has need of you, as He needs nobody else; that God works through you, as He works through nobody else; that God speaks through you, as He speaks through nobody else. Realize that you are a finite organ of infinite goodness and mystery; it will kill your conceit and it will thrill your heart. And then, I beseech you, do not ignore the man in your own circle. Go to him, also, though it will be a harder task than to go to the hall bedroom or the grimy back street. Go to him and tell him that God and His soul are the undying realities. He may be rich, but a deathless man cannot be vitally nourished on lifeless stocks and bonds. He may live in a palace, but if the world itself is not large enough for a soul, four walls may pinch and shrivel him into the mummy of a man. He may be brilliant, but if he is not wise unto the eternal wisdom, he knows that all his brilliance is only a flickering taper which one gust of the wind of eternity will blow out. Essentially, he is a lonely man. "Unlovely, nay, frightful," said an American philosopher, "is the solitude of the soul which is without God in the

world." Go tell him, then, of that God who loves good society, of that Christ who is creating a kingdom of pure souls. You may be amazed at the manifestation of God's works in him through you. Browning wrote Francis Thompson, who stood knee-deep in the mud and mire of London streets and wrote songs that might be sung to harps of gold, a generous letter of appreciation and encouragement. Now Mr. Wilfrid Meynell was the man who called Browning's attention to Thompson's genius, as he was the greatheart who nursed the "vagabond poet" back to life and hope. And it was to Meynell that Thompson wrote one of the most beautiful letters ever written. "So to you," he said, "I owe not merely Browning's notice, but also that ever I should have been worth his notice. The little flowers you sent him were sprung from your own seed. I only hope that the time may not be far distant when better and less scanty flowers may repay the pains and patience and tenderness of your gardening." Well, if a princely soul like Wilfrid Meynell can sow seed which blossom into those lovely flowers of song named "The Hound of Heaven," and the "Ode to the Setting Sun," it is gloriously possible for you to introduce your fellow mortals to that Divine Being whom Browning called "the Perfect Poet." Yes; God writes poetry in the shining stars; in the sun that does its "dying so triumphally;" in wingèd creatures that warble; in lowly creatures that creep; in clods that bloom

through their stir of inner night; in old things and new things, in little things and big things God is pouring in and out His vastly sweet and deep poetic tides. But Paul thought God wrote His best poetry not in things, but in souls; not in stars, but in men; not in fair moons, but in fair women; not in the sob of surging seas, but in the laughter of silver-voiced children. "We," says Paul, "are God's poems." Then let us strive to be worthy of our Author. Have we lost our spiritual rhythm, our celestial rhyme, our planetlike music? Then I recommend to you this ideal song restorer: Tell some weaker, lonelier one of the rescuing, redeeming Christ. You will then get back your own song even while you give immortal singing to a songless human. And what is more important still, you will make an opportunity for God to manifest His works of Saviourhood. O, help God, help your friend, help yourself! Be a spiritual architect, building upon true foundations. The temple of your soul may arise without the sound of hammer or trowel just because it rises to the music of eternity!

"I will hew great windows for my soul,
Channels of splendour, portals of release;
Out of earth's prison walls will I hew them,
That my thundering soul may push through them;
Through stratas of human strife and passion
I will tunnel a way, I will carve and fashion
With the might of my soul's intensity
Windows fronting immensity,
Towering out of Time.

I will breathe the air of another clime
That my spirit's pain may cease.
That the *being* of me have room to grow,
That my eyes may meet God's eyes and know,
I will hew great windows, wonderful windows, measureless windows, for my soul."

III

The works of God manifest in human suffering and sorrow is one of the lustrous chapters in the history of our kind. I am not thinking now of those who receive a pin-scratch and complain as if they had had a sword-thrust; nor of those who have the toothache and imagine the world to be one gaping mouth of pain; nor of those who, when they "skid" upon slippery streets, vociferate as if they had been torpedoed by a submarine. I am thinking, rather, of that great company whose white robes are being sewed with crimson stitches, as their wearers go up out of sore tribulation to join their snow-plumed comrades on the beautiful, painless Other Side. It is upon beds of pain that we detect the deeper processes of soul-making. Wordsworth defined "poetry as the breath of the finer spirit of knowledge." May we not say that suffering, in which body and soul have their respective parts, is the breath of the finer spirit of life? For the inmost, utmost things of God are revealed through pain. For example, how does God manifest his finest work in patience? He takes this young New York mother, terribly injured, shuts

her in a Second Avenue room no larger than a compartment in Noah's Ark. She cannot get out, so she stays there—stays ten years, then twenty, then thirty, then forty, then fifty-one years. But she is not alone; God is not a theory to her; He is more real than the light that quivers in the lens of her eye. In time that room becomes a shrine for pilgrims from the ends of the earth. There is no music, no art, no eloquence, no learning to draw them. No; but there is life—great, rich, joyous, uncomplaining, transfigured life, holy character made in the higher moulds of reality. Bella Cook knew things eternal as not one in millions do. There is probably not another case of invalidism in history comparable to this great woman's. She saw her twelve physicians pass away; she wrote her books in agonies of pain; she superintended the interests of her various mission fields with statesmanlike ability; she became a dedicated human conduit through which the rich poured their streams of golden bounty; she sent her messages of love and good cheer to the ends of the earth. But she herself was the living miracle of grace and patience. One cannot forget the morning he entered St. Peter's for the first time; nor the afternoon he scaled the snowy marble heights of Milan Cathedral; but that little upper room, in the rear of that Second Avenue saloon, is more indelibly impressed upon my memory than the wonderful temples are. Why, there was something holy, something awful,

about that room! Its roof was so thin that the sky just seemed to come caving in; it was so large that space seemed straitened to contain it; it was so high that one seemed to stand on the highest star, ready to humbly place his foot on the lowest step of the throne of God. And how does God manifest his works of human tenderness? He dreams the dream of parenthood into two souls with but a single thought. Then the infant, the boy, the youth comes to gladden all their days. Yes; he comes, but alas! he goes—goes and leaves grief's fiery footprints behind. "Who is the woman with the face of an angel? Who is the man with the tender, solicitous eyes?" These are questions whispered in many a gathering where work is being done for God's poor today. That sweet, pure feminine face, that strong, kindly masculine face are types well-known in our world. They have lost their own for a while that they might gain others and their own forever. They father and mother a whole community now, whereas they might have fathered and mothered one family before. But now theirs is the might of a divine mildness, the strength that joyfully yields to the needs of human weakness. Ah, how does God manifest His most august works, at last peopling heaven with heavenly souls? First of all, He peoples earth with Christlike men and women; and the road to Christlikeness leads through Gethsemane on to Calvary. If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him;

we must learn to bear the cross before we are fit to wear the crown. Advised to go into a garden of roses and be inspired, Ibsen answered: "No; put mould in my eyes and make me blind; or send me into the grim city, and I will sing you the jubilee of life." Thus the secret of a universe in the making is this: The profoundest, most hallowed chanters of the jubilee of life learn their parts, not in a garden of roses only, but in a garden where thorns grow before roses blow. There is one prayer we men and women in health ought always to pray, and never to faint in praying: "My Father, for Christ's sake, make me unafraid of pain; make me fearless of the dark. If it be Thy holy will for me to suffer, now in health grant me faith to realize that Thou art lovingly seeking an opportunity to manifest Thy divinest works, as Thou canst not in a life unacquainted with pain and sorrow. Amen." God would not be God, my friends, if He were more interested in giving us easy and comfortable lives than He is divinely determined to make us large and comprehensive souls. Trouble, pain, sickness, and sorrow are heaven's challenge to us to try the resources of our spirit, even while we give God His chance to manifest finer works than are seen in mountains, suns, and stars. Be not afraid, therefore, of the dark; for—

> "The dark hath many dear avails;
> The dark distils divinest dews;
> The dark is rich with nightingales,
> With dreams, and with the Heavenly Muse."

IX

THE CHRISTIAN'S WEALTH

"Wherefore, let no one glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—I Cor. III: 21, 22, 23.

IT is said that Tennyson's brother, Frederick, was a shy, backward youth, easily nonplussed at social functions. To calm Frederick as they entered a drawing-room, Alfred would whisper to him: "Now just think of Herschel's star-clusters, brother." The poet knew that if the mind of his brother was caught up into the majesty and immensity of astronomic worlds, he could be neither awed nor excited by the babble of the average drawing-room. Paul applies a like principle to the Christian. Tempted to dwell among small things, bewildered by the world's gaudy shows, blinded by the flying dust of the present, Christians lose the sense of true perspective. Evidently, the Corinthians had suffered such a loss. That is why Paul recalls them to their better, deeper selves; that is why he reminds them of their immeasurable wealth. All we need is to get Paul's viewpoint, Paul's vision of God in

Christ, and we, too, shall begin to think more worthily of our gleaming piles of uncounted gold.

I

In taking account of the Christian's wealth, Paul makes a large place for all true teachers. "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." The completely universal mind is the Christian mind. Wherever truth is, in any realm of being, there the Christian has a challenge to gird up his mental loins for conquest. For truth is not isolated, local, fragmentary; truth is as unprejudiced as the sun, as calm as the everlasting hills, as unconfined as the ether. All that truth requires to make its home in a personality is a pure heart, a hungry mind, and an obedient will. This is all, I say, but it is everything. Wherever you find purity of heart, intellectual integrity, and unswerving obedience to the highest, you invariably find a combination of qualities possible only to the soul that is living out the reality of the inliving Christ. He is the owner of all truth-bringers. He says: "Paul, with his immortal cargoes of truth, outward bound from the Coasts of Eternity, is mine; but Paul was so heavily freighted that he could not bring all of my wealth to me. So God sent me another consignment by Apollos; and lo! when the good ship Apollos arrived, loaded to the water's edge, I found that there was still more to come. Looking again toward the sea of truth, I

beheld Cephas sailing direct to my spiritual port. Then, after all had come ashore, Captain Paul gathered us about him and said: 'Brethren, we have brought you some nuggets from the mines of truth; we have sailed the oceans of mystery to deliver our precious freight at your doors; but there is so much more behind, so much that He who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, desires to send you, that He has chartered all noble spiritual craft to ply between Him and your souls. One may be Paul, another Apollos, and another Cephas; but the names are less than the truth they bring. All true teachers are your servants, ordained by the God of nature and of grace, to enrich you; all—all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'"

Unfortunately, many Christian people fall far short of Paul's standard in measuring their wealth. We are tempted to lease too many of truth's domains to error, unbelief, and infidelity. We cut our vast spiritual estate up into cross-lots and say: "This belongs to science; this to philosphy; this to art; and that to the world." Have we not a fatal genius for makeshifts? Do we not glory in our span-high artificiality? Now, Paul's attitude is opposed to all this. He was a spiritual statesman, claiming the universe as his own. He refused to concede any part of God's dominion to the devil. He regarded sin as an outlaw, a vile intruder, having no rights, and entitled to none. Manifested to destroy the works of the devil, Christ restores man to his true

order and heirship in the worlds and the ages. Consequently, Paul seems to say: "Hold up every true teacher coming your way and shake the truth out of him. At first he may be loath to part with his truth, but stand pleadingly by until he imparts what is rightfully your own also." If only we are in Christ and Christ in us, we may becomingly waylay every truth-bringer from Moses to Paul, from Plato to Darwin, relieve him of his gleaming treasure without pauperizing him, and go on our way rejoicing, because we are as sure of being guided into all truth as we are that "the innocent moon, which nothing does but shine, moves all the labouring surges of the world." We must have more of Paul's catholicity and mental ampleness, which is the fruit of genuine Christian faith. Let a man but attain the apostle's viewpoint and he will exclaim with Mrs. Browning: "I shall never again be poor, thank God!" Breasting the stream of the years unafraid, he is ever searching the floors of the spiritual deeps for new pearls of truth. He has ceased to glory in men because he has seen the glory of God. No longer interested in building disturbing fences around sectarian gardens, he delights in counting the star-panels that fence in his shining worlds of beauty and love. Owning the solar year of time and the dateless eras of eternity, the Christian also owns Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, and all truth-bearers from all realms.

II

Because all things belong to God and His Christ, Paul puts in a second claim of the Christian. He says that "the world" is his also. Such a statement must be carefully scrutinized. Various kinds of people have imagined that they owned the world, but somehow it always slipped out of their uncertain grasp. Our very myths, and even history itself, are shot through with the claims of fictitious world-owners. In childhood we hear of Midas and Crœsus; of the world-conquerors, Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon; of the kings of finance, whose morning-steps in Wall Street shake the markets of the world before sundown. On the other hand, we are familiar with another type of world-owner today. His claims are blatantly pressed in many quarters. He is the Judas among the apostles of labour. He says: "Everything belongs to the working man; he is the only creator of wealth; therefore, let him take a stick of dynamite and claim his own." But it is scarcely worth while to say that neither Crœsus, nor the tyrant, nor the anarchist has any permanent or true claims to world-ownership. Both in theory and practice they are its abject slaves.

Well, then, have Paul and his fellow-Christians any deeper, juster reasons for saying: "Millionaires, kings, and revolutionists may come and go, but I go on forever; and whether I go or come, the

world is mine?" I think there is an affirmative answer to this proposition which is self-evident. It is the ultimate philosophy of all possession worthy of the name. What is that philosophy? You know the answer before I express it in a single sentence: World-ownership is a matter of spiritual capacity. It is just this—nothing more, but nothing less. Stripped of all externals, and bared to the bone, the true owner of the world is the soul capable of appreciating it; the mind that receives the expression of the Eternal Mind within the world and the universe; the heart that responds to the quivering Heart of Love beating His music out in stars and birds and babes and sages.

Sometimes I go into a great auditorium to hear the wonderful organ music. Who is the real owner of that instrument? "Why," you say, "the merchant-prince whose money made it possible. The building is his; his money paid the manufacturer for installing the organ; his money hires the organist." As a matter of fact, your answer is true so far as it goes, but it does not go very far, certainly not far enough. The deeper ownership—the ownership that abides after auditorium, organ pipes, and keyboard are dust blown about the iron hills—is vested in the melody-haunted soul. It may be in the organist himself; it may be in some friendless, homeless, hunger-bitten body of a man who has wandered in to rest his weary feet; it may be in a Paderewski or a Hoffman, sitting unobserved in the audience, while

reeling palaces of melody and chiming towers of harmony are built before the very eyes of their souls. At any rate, the absolute owner of the organ, the man who holds an indisputable title-deed thereto, is the man most capable of enjoying the music. One day I went with some friends to see a Turner. In the company was Mr. Dabo, the painter. Coming away from the gallery, I asked two questions. The first concerned the picture's money value. "Three hundred thousand dollars, at least," was the answer. My second question was: "Who owns this painting?" If I remember correctly, neither Mr. Dabo nor Doctor Hillis was quite certain on that point. But, after all, the dealer's ownership is of secondary importance. The original, the primary ownership of that painting belongs to Turner himself. Storms and waves and clouds loved to linger on the end of his brush long enough to see their living image caught in his unfading colours. All the art dealers in Rome, Paris, London, and New York cannot dispute J. M. W. Turner's inviolable possession of that picture. Hounds of persecution may dog him while he is living, and jackals of slander may howl about his grave when he is dead. But never fear! High above them all, wrapped in sweet serenity and hidden from the strife of tongues, this rare soul, true brother to nature's calm and stormful moods, sits whispering to himself: "I am glad to lend England, America, and the world my pictures; I painted them for the

glory of God; I gave them away for the good of humanity; and, therefore, I own them; they are mine forever."

This sermon was written on Mocking Bird Hill, overlooking Louisa, Ky., my boyhood home. Sitting under a hawthorn tree, these feathered soloists almost broke up my sermonic efforts. For the mocking-bird is a Beethoven on wings, the Shakespeare of the twigs, the Homer of the atmosphere. He goes mad with song. Not only does his voice pour forth a many-strained versatility, embracing every kind of sound from the croak of a tree-frog to the lyric sweetness of the Kentucky cardinal; but even his body is caught in the current of his ecstasy, and he tosses rhythmic somersaults in the air while his golden rain of song falls in unbroken torrents. Yonder he sits singing in the top of a tree; in a moment he is on the wing, singing as he flies; in another moment he is sitting once again in a green choir-loft, still mad with music, never pausing in going from tree to tree. The mocker seems to think that life is too short not to be singing all the time; or else he has such fountains of music in him that he fears he will never, never have time enough to pour them all out. If the birds ever get together and form a sort of labour union, they will have to do without this Mozart of the hills. For he believes in singing overtime. After he has sung the songs of all the other birds all day long as well as they themselves can sing them, he takes up his own

song at sunset and lends to the night an enchantment he denied to the day. Well, I think of two possible owners of this marvellous bird. One is a bird-seller. Mail him a check for $15 and he will send you a singer up from the southland. And is he not the bird's rightful owner? "Certainly I am," he says. "I caught him; he is my property; I have the right to do as I please with him." But there was once a man down in the forests of Louisiana by the name of Audubon. He lived in those woods year after year. He understood not only the anatomy of this bird; but he knew his habits, his social qualities, his romances, his tragedies, his devotion to his wingèd partner. Audubon loved the mocking-bird and heard him sing in his native haunts. Therefore, he has written about him as enthusiastically as the wooer sings his own dropping-song in the delirious period of his honeymoon.

Who owns the bird songs of the hills—the mere merchant or the true naturalist? Who owns the world—Nero or Paul, Cæsar or Christ? Long ago the dead hand of the Roman relaxed its impossible grasp, while the living power of Christ and Paul waxes with the centuries, never to wane. God leases the universe to all who can pay for it in the invisible coin of appreciation. Deity hangs in the window of every star, on the breast of every sea, on the summit of every hill, on the leaf of every tree, on the face of every flower, on the peaks of history, on the souls of immortal men and women,

the sign: "*To Let!* The only rental fee is capacity to enjoy. The many-splendoured universe is now open for inspection. The ancient, ever-faithful guide named Love will conduct you. He accepts no 'tips,' but he rigidly demands the power of appreciation." This highest ownership is well illustrated in Emerson's address on Thoreau. Farmers hired the naturalist to survey their lands. But when they discovered his rare accuracy and skill, his knowledge of Indian remains, birds, trees, and soils, which enabled him to disclose to every farmer more than he knew of his own acres, Emerson says the farmer began to feel as if Mr. Thoreau had better rights in his fields than he. Nero owned the Golden House and shod his mules with silver. Then Paul came with his true measuring line, adding the Golden House, then Rome, then the world, then the universe to his Mamertine prison, the observatory from which he viewed thrones and dominions and principalities and powers. In due time Nero and his myrmidons were dispossessed. History has vindicated Paul's claims, while the emperor's handful of dust has gone swirling down the bleak spaces of oblivion. Are you a Christian? Then the world is yours, because—

> "The world stands out on either side
> No wider than the heart is wide;
> Above the world is stretched the sky,—
> No higher than the soul is high.
> The heart can push the sea and land
> Farther away on either hand;

The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through.
But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart;
And he whose soul is flat—the sky
Will cave in on him by and by."

III

In itemizing the Christian's wealth, Paul includes what is at once man's most precious, most mysterious gift—life. What is life? Who can define it? Manifestations of life are everywhere. Here is this clover bloom at my feet; life has put on a pink crown. Yonder is a cow munching the grass; the same life that wears pink here has put on yellow there. There on the hill-summit is a company of tall, evergreen pines. Each tree is a bugle for the morning wind to try its breath on. A few hundred yards below the pines, a hound is tracking a rabbit. In the tree, life has broken into root, cone, branch, twig; in the dog, the very same life has put on bones, flesh, blood, hair. I am sitting on a stone. It was very old when civilization along the Nile was yet in its infancy. From the stone, I see the sun tiptoeing over the West Virginia hills. The sun is ninety-five millions of miles away; the stone is so near that I touch it with my hand; but life—the same identical, mystery-laden life—has taken on brightness in the sun while it has assumed hardness in the stone. Here on this weed is a butterfly, escaped from its chrysalis-prison into quivering seas of sapphire. Its colourings are so gorgeous that

that supreme artist, the sun, shakes his burning curls with pride and says: "Well, I have done my best!" Now the butterfly has left the weed and is poised upon the small apple of this hawthorn tree. Yet the life that goes winging in velvet and purple is also the life that goes clinging in unpretentious weed and applegreen haw. There goes an ant across the grass. Darwin thinks his brain represents the most marvellous speck of matter in the universe. Just over my head a spider is spinning his web. He is one of the rare creatures who can walk out into space and build his bridge as he goes. But the same life that expresses itself in the wisdom of the ant is one with the life that manifests itself in the ingenuity of the spider. Life has millions of variations, but its tune is one. Before science began its great career, Paul thus expressed the principle of life's unity in its infinite variety: "One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." Professor Carruth's poem, "Immanence," is based upon this passage:

"A fire-mist and a planet,
A crystal and a cell,
A jelly-fish and a saurian,
And caves, where the cavemen dwell.
Then a sense of law and beauty,
And a face turned from the clod:
Some call it Evolution,
And others call it God.

A haze on the far horizon,
The infinite, tender sky,

The ripe, rich tint of the cornfields
And the wild birds sailing by;
And, all over upland and lowland,
The charm of the golden rod:
Some of us call it Autumn,
But others call it God.

A picket, frozen on duty,
A mother, starved for her brood;
Socrates, drinking the hemlock,
And Jesus on the rood;
The million who, humble and nameless,
The straight, hard pathway plod:
Some call it Consecration,
And others call it God.

. . . . . .

Earth redeemed and made glorious,
Lighted by Heaven within;
Men and angels brought face to face,
With never a thought of sin;
Lion and lamb together lie
In the flowers that sweeten the sod;
Some of us call it Brotherhood,
And others call it God."

Life's highest tones, of course, are heard in its moral and spiritual aspects. From the deep-domed heavens of the soul alone may human beings look down upon all the lower ranges of life and call them good. Then do we understand, with Agassiz, that a natural law is as sacred as a moral principle; and with Coleridge, how truths, which lie bedridden in the dormitory of the mind side by side with the most despised and exploded errors, catch fire, spring to their feet, and run through the length and breadth of creation, shouting: "This is my Father's

world. Life—deep, boundless, abundant life in Christ Jesus—is mine. Unaffrighted by the silent stars above me, undismayed by the silent graves below me, out of the Deep I came and into the Deep I go, befriended, soothed, and deathlessly nourished by life, which is the ever-present goodness and love of God."

IV

Paul strikes no loftier note in his sphere-music than in his ownership of death. Most people act as if they belonged to death and his strong box named a hole in the ground. Two thousand years of New Testament teaching, reënforced by the power of the living Christ, have failed to lift multitudes of professing Christians above such a viewpoint. They emphasize the grotesque, pagan, physical phases of death; but Christ puts the emphasis upon the kind of death that is truly terrible—the death spiritual. Men greatly fear the death of their bodies, which is as natural as the fading of a leaf or the withering of a flower, and give as little heed to their dead souls as an animal does to the star-hung firmament. Physical death, according to Martineau, is God's method of colonization, the means by which He brings Home his children out of all ages and climes. Euripides regarded death as the awakening to eternal life. Or we may think of man as enjoying a three-fold birth. First, he comes through the wondrous gateway of birth into this

world. He knows nothing of his journey here; he is no more responsible for it than he is for the creation of the constellations. But ignorant, irresponsible, helpless as he is, he finds a world ready for his reception. There is atmosphere for his womb-formed lungs, light for his eyes, sound for his ears, food for his body, and, last of all, the enclasping arms of maternal love. Infinite preparation has been made for his reception. As quaint, deep-souled George Herbert sang, for him the winds do blow, rains fall, moons rise, suns set; all forces and laws are for him; he could not get on with an atom less nor a star more. The whole universe, says Alfred Russel Wallace, has been created and is sustained in the interest of human life. Moses, and other prophets, said the same thousands of years before, and it is interesting to hear this great scientist repeating what the deepest consciousness of the race has felt. But after awhile this star-reaching being climbs over the sides of his cradle and begins to scale the cliffs of worlds. Stifled for breath, cramped for room, hungry for the infinite, he goes climbing up and on. What troubles this mystery-creature? Why, he is just aching for his new and second birth. Looking to the Christ of God, he is born again. Thus the man-child kicks off his material covering, leaps out of his narrow bed, runs up the hills of life and views the far-flung, shining lands of God. Passing through his second gate with the zeal of an athlete and the shout of a con-

queror, he knocks at last at his third gateway—the grave. In autumn the farmer husks his corn that he may garner the golden grain. But is the farmer the corn's enemy? Stripping off the husk, is he not both friend and saviour? Not otherwise is death God's husbandman, husking the human corn for sky-granaries; man's true friend, giving his body back to the dust and setting free his soul. Standing by six feet of turf, the Christian says: "O grave, where is thy victory? Since my Saviour hath plucked out thy sin-sting, O death, thou hast lost thy terror. Ah, dear green grave in the sod, thou art my friend and servant. All things work together for good to them that love God, and thou art my last faithful worker in this world. O death, thou, too, art mine! Come when thou wilt, thou art Heaven's angel-sent courier to conduct me to Him who hath destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light."

V

Finally, Paul rounds out the Christian's wealth by saying that now and forever belong to him—"things present or things to come." The words thunder with warning and thrill with hope. The warning is this: Things to come are yours only if you make wise use of things present. Browning's injunction to leave now to dogs and apes because man has forever, is grievously abused. It is worse than folly to waste unreturning to-days and imag-

ine that we shall recover their treasure in far-off unknown to-morrows. The years and days of time are so precious that eternity cannot reproduce their like. Silently, swiftly they go, to return no more; but they do not leave us as they found us. Here and now we give character its trend and destiny our verdict. Neither God nor angels can compel us to begin the business of life in another world on any larger spiritual capital than we were willing to carry in this. "But," you reply, "I will be better then, loving what God loves and hating what God hates." But if you are not growing better now, what right have you to think you will be better then? "But I will have more light then." Of what benefit will more light be, when you have turned the light you have into darkness? Would not more light, under such conditions, be more darkness, more hell? The only way to mortgage the future is by underwriting to-day by love and service and worship.

Doing this, you shall have the courage of the future—things to come, the power of the endless life, shall begin now to certify their value to you. "But," you ask, "how am I to get this courage of the future, born of my ownership of things to come?" I answer: By living well to-day, by loyalty to things present. A picture direct from life may help you. I watched a bird building her nest on the strong arm of an oak tree. Away she flew, now up the valley, now across the fields, now over the hills, always returning with a piece of rag,

a bit of horse-hair, a sprig of grass, which she wove into her home. As she worked away, I said to her: "You poor, foolish bird. What are you building that nest for? You have nothing to put into it." Gazing at me with a far-away, wistful look, she seemed to answer: "Never you mind, short-sighted man. God never disappoints his creatures. Somewhere in this universe—I feel it in my mothering heart—something is waiting to fill my nest." So she kept on building day by day. One morning I saw her flash across the fields on expectant wings. Missing her for several days, I said: "She is gone now, and will never come back." But before a week had gone, I heard a sudden noise of wings in the branches of the old oak. Looking up, I saw the golden-breasted home-builder and—her gallant lover! A few days later I climbed the tree, peeped into the nest, and lo! there were three speckled eggs in it. Then for several days I watched the brooding mother, patient as fate, upon her nest. Day by day and night by night she kept watch above her own. Well, I went away and returned in late July. I looked at the nest, but it was empty. "Just as I expected," I said to myself, keenly disappointed. "I knew all along that that bird was very foolish for building a nest." Just then I heard a burst of song! It was the mother talking to her husband about their three beautiful fledglings. But when she spied me, she said: "Mr. Man, did I not tell you that God had something for my home? He

whispered me in the ear, and even then I heard the twitter within my unbuilt, songless nest. At once I began to build; I went out, not knowing whither I went, a prophet on wings, and lo! God hath more than kept His promise. Let me present to you my son and two daughters."

Among other things, that mother-bird has taught me the courage of the future. And that courage is born in the Master's thought and teaching. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." What insight, what care, what love, He says, have gone into the making of the lowliest creatures! Now hear His golden conclusion: "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered! Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." God knoweth the way we take, and He takes us along the way. There are no lone coasts where He is not. He dwells in and beyond the pathless air to guide you and the bird. The wings of the morning are not strong enough to pinion you away from His hovering Presence. Wherefore, glory not in men, but in the wealth which God hath given you. For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

"No matter what my birth may be,
No matter where my lot is cast,

I am the heir in equity
Of all the precious past.

The art, the science, and the lore
Of all the ages long since dust,
The wisdom of the world in store,
Are mine, all mine in trust.

The beauty of the living earth,
The power of the golden sun,
The Present, whatso'er my birth,
I share with every one.

As much as any man am I
The owner of the working day;
Mine are the minutes as they fly
To save or throw away.

And mine the Future to bequeath
Unto the generations new;
I help to shape it with my breath,
Mine as I think or do.

Present and Past my heritage,
The Future laid in my control;—
No matter what my name or age,
I am a Christian soul."

X

THE FINAL CANDOUR

"For nothing is hid, that shall not be made manifest; nor anything secret, that shall not be known and come to light." —St. Luke viii: 17.

THIS is our Lord's way of saying that we live in a transparent universe. Apparently, just the opposite is true. So many curtains of enigma, rustlingly blown by the winds of mystery, tremble before our gaze, that we sometimes despair of discerning clarity, intention, purposefulness in the trend of things. The darkness seems deep and permanent while the light seems superficial and transient. The gloom is steadfast, the gleam is fitful; sin is glaringly triumphant, righteousness is modestly unassertive; distintegrating doubt is obstinate, constructive faith is difficult to practise. Is not this a familiar reading of the world? Unquestionably it is, and it is essentially untrue. For despite the apparent meaninglessnesses of life, there is a profound, universal, unceasingly active, shaping power that makes for order, for righteousness, for the realization of the one increasing purpose which runs from everlasting to everlasting. In a word, Christ says that the principle of self-revelation is

ingrained in the universe, in history, in things, in men. All are out on a campaign of ultimate, noon-clear publicity. There is a final candour at the heart of things. The hidden evil and the hidden goodness are alike marching toward manifestation. There can be no permanent secrets in a scheme of things whose genius is detection and publication. "For nothing is hid," says the Master, "that shall not be made manifest; nor anything secret, that shall not be known and come to light." Thus the law of the final candour operates toward sin and holiness, falsehood and truth, hate and love—every nook and cranny of being is searched out and published without sensation, but with solemn truth, to the whole round world.

I

Let us begin with the candour of thought. What could be more hidden, less possible of manifestation, than thinking? Where does thought come from anyway? What is it? How did thought originate? We say, knowing little enough about such high things, that first of all there was a Thinker. But the Infinite Thinker does not conceal His thought. Given the Eternal Thinker, His thinking starts out at once upon the highways of manifestation. God thinks, and in due time there are multitudinous thinkings, which we thoughtlessly call things. The most wonderful feature of suns and planets is not their size, their distance, their inconceivable age.

The astonishing thing is that each is the expressed thought of God, that each is a thought of Deity burst into brilliant bloom. Worlds are first thought through, and then they begin to clothe themselves in matter. They cannot but manifest that which was originally hidden—the thought preceding their creation. Thus it is throughout the whole of things, from the minutest to the largest, from the greatest to the infinitesimal. Things are alive with life, and life is alive with thought, purpose, goal. The nerves of the universe are tingling to manifest their hidden thought-energies. Look up at night, and what do you see? Stars? Yes; but stars are only golden buds hanging upon the tree of thought. The roots of that tree are sunken deep in the mind of God. The divine thought thrilled up through those roots, pumping life into trunk and bough, and now, after a million celestial springs, these astral apples have reddened upon the unseen branches of the tree of thought. Or look down here at the ground. It is cold and bleak and bare. But go out in April, and the desolation floats a delicate flag of frail green. Now, if that tender grass-blade could talk—or rather, if you could hear, it does talk—would it not say: "The fiery-hearted sun sweated in shaping me. Night unvested her mooned and starry bosom to suckle me. Heaven yearned toward me in weeping rain, and all her mothering pinions were stretched over my little cradle. She slaved for my welfare. Thunders and lightnings and winds and

seas have toiled to feed me. The strength of Nature's pregnant thews have stooped to honour my frail majesty. Epitomized in me is the mystery of the solar system—'God focussed to a point.'" You see, God's thoughts burn through all the folds of expression, whether it is a Jupiter patrolling the confines of space or a grass-blade humming its vernal music at your feet. The divine thought cannot be hidden because its inmost genius is manifestation. Give God time, and the universe, which has been thought through, will manifest the perfection of the One Original Thinker. Give God time, and human redemption, which was kept secret from before times eternal, shall be fully known and come into that glorious light in Whom there is no darkness at all.

Now, because of this wide-ranging principle, consider the candour of thought in its human aspects. Here is a man who thinks black. His thoughts are soaked with darkness, dyed in thick, tangled glooms of inky night. Undoubtedly the mystery of iniquity is seen in such an example. But the iniquity is not all. Another mystery is this: The man foolishly imagines that his thoughts are hidden and secret, that they shall never be known and come to light. Such self-deception is a part of sin's awful tragedy. For if the man were keenly aware that his thoughts are wide open to inherent and universal scrutiny, that his dusky imaginings are flying toward the light,

perhaps he would not play out his stupid ostrich antics with such unblushing audacity. "The habits of the mind form the soul," said Balzac, "and the soul gives expression to the face." In other words, the face is the visible map of the invisible mind. Dark thoughts stain through the whitest features. How sad that we do not believe this! Disregarding it, men and women go on thinking untrue, unholy thoughts, imagining all the while that they are cloaked in densest concealment. They are, in reality, the pathetic victims of the law of the final candour.

Happily, there is a nobler side to all this. For man was never designed to think black, but white. Our thoughts are sheep and we are their shepherds. Armed with rod and staff, we must lead our mystic thought-flocks up into the green pastures of nourishing reality. Threading the higher ranges of being, we shall constantly hear the still waters of peace murmuring all around us. When some wolf of untruth, some roaring lion of impurity springs out of the hidden lair, He who shepherds our changes—that Great Shepherd of the sheep—shall lend us strength to smite our enemy down, as we guard our white and precious fold from polluting taint. Where is there a lovelier, finer vision than that of the fair company of mental good shepherds, who have led their flocks of thoughts forth to graze upon the shining pasturelands of truth, and to feed upon the gleaming hilltops of the spiritual? Moses

returned from Sinai's smoke and fire garbed in supernal lustres. His personality threw off spiritual heat and light. The people were afraid to come near him. The majesty of law flowered out in the lawgiver's face. When lofty thinking puts on flesh and blood, it signifies that eternity has broken in upon time, that divinity has cut through our hard human moulds and transfigured them. John, Peter, Paul, Stephen, and a noble company of the higher thinkers, have revealed the vast spiritual zones in which we immortals are privileged to travel. Under God, and led by Christ, they have broken eternal trails, they have pioneered pathless realms, they have turned the great unknown into the alluringly homelike, building therein a heavenful fireside about which pilgrims gather and talk of the joys and sorrows of their journey. The clean, deep splendour of eternity is at their heart. Standing face to face with God, walking His way, thinking His thoughts, the grace and beauty of their souls now shine upon us like sunlight behind a flower. Finding earth unclear, they left it in the brothering grip of an ever-growing transparency. The bigness of their lives and the richness of their service blossomed out of this principle that nothing can be ultimately hid, that everything reaches toward manifestation; that every secret thing shall be known and come to light.

II

The law of final candour also finds interpretation in our words. The least expressive part of a man may be his tongue, and yet his tongue is a serious instrument of expression. If we always remembered this, we might think more clearly and speak less fluently. Certainly our words are imbedded deep in the soul of things. The Master, who passed external nature by in his eagerness to reach the inner shrine of being and declare the truth by which the worlds move, tremendously emphasized the seriousness of human words. He said that men must give an account for every idle, hurtful word they speak. The dictophone is being used today with startling effect. Men go into a closed room and unfold their nefarious schemes. Foul deeds and political corruption are discussed with brazen frankness. And lo! it turns out that those four dumb walls were alive with mechanical ears. The tones of the speaker's voice, the very words he used in expressing his shadowy thoughts, are caught up and in open court come back into the cringing criminal's own mouth. Now, the universe is one colossal dictophone. We do not know how it operates. Our thought and discovery are as yet in their infancy concerning such far-reaching laws. But that there is a spiritual system, infinitely more subtle than wireless waves or anything within the compass of man's device, registering thoughts,

words, and deeds, there is not the slightest doubt. Scientists say that we can do almost anything with matter, except to change its mass or quantity. We can alter its form, density, temperature, state of aggregation; but we cannot alter its mass. What if this mighty revolving cylinder of matter, as mysterious as spirit, capable of endless modification, incapable of the slightest deviation, should possess a more than waxlike sensitiveness that catches our words and holds them until the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed? If I cannot raise my arm without troubling a star; if I cannot make the slightest movement without jarring the whole of nature; if I cannot toss a stone into the sea without stirring the deep from the hugest billow to the smallest wavelet, it is just possible that I cannot speak a word that does not go on singing or sobbing, blessing or blighting, inspiring or insulting, praying or blaspheming, to the utmost marge of the world, to the attentive ear of the Judge of the quick and the dead.

What an incentive to wise and gracious speech this solemn truth should be! Dress your thought in rich, loving words—words dipped in the heart's golden pools of godliness—and it will go on before to proclaim your coming; it will be there to welcome you into the snow-pure societies of the Everlasting Habitations. Jean Paul was wont to say that no day should close without a look at the stars. Likewise, no day should close without our speaking

some fine, warm, generous word for God and men. Then, when the stars come out and we look up, we shall find them shining with a strange new brightness that spills down into our inbreathing spirits. "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life," declares the wise man. And the leaves of that tree, in all the green wonder of their fragrant words, are for the healing of hurt hearts. Ah! let us see to it that this lingual tree, rooted in the soil of fair, prolific thought, is frequently shaken as we go our pilgrim ways. For fruitful words, which are indeed apples of gold in pictures of silver, cannot be hid. They may be heedlessly tossed upon the ground in wanton neglect; but the law of the final candour shall manifest their unwithering vitality; their secret, inreaching power shall be known and come to light in that far-off Spring of which all springs are the vernal prophecy. Do you not remember the words of Stevenson's old Mataafa chief, one of the builders of the Road of the Loving Heart? As Stevenson lay dead, the chief came, and, crouching beside the body of the man who died with a thousand stories still in his heart, said: "I am only a poor Samoan and ignorant; others are rich and can give Tusitala the parting presents of rich fine mats; I am poor, and can give nothing this last day he receives his friends. Yet I am not afraid to come and look the last time in my friend's face, never to see him more till we meet with God." Surely, there is an elemental majesty, an unutterable sublimity in the

grand old Samoan's speech! He was poor; he was ignorant; he could bring no gift on that day when the dead author received his friends. But ah! the old chief had helped to build the Road of the Loving Heart, and so he was unafraid to come and look into his dead friend's face. Would you be a builder of the Road of the Loving Heart? Would you cast up a highway for the coming of the King? Would you be a planter of rose bushes instead of thorn trees? Then think true thoughts and speak true words. Why, a pure thought, blown into the blossom of a pure word, is one of the supreme mysteries of the world. It is like the daisy, of which Mrs. Meynell sings in a poem that Ruskin pronounced the finest thing he had seen or felt in modern verse:

"Slight as thou art, thou art enough to hide
Like all created things, secrets from me,
And stand a barrier to eternity.
And I, how can I praise thee well and wide
From where I dwell—upon the hither side?
Thou little veil for so great mystery,
When shall I penetrate all things and thee,
And then look back? For this I must abide,
Till thou shalt grow and fold and be unfurled
Literally between me and the world.
Then I shall drink from in beneath a spring,
And from a poet's side shall read his book.
O daisy mine, what will it be to look
From God's side even of such a simple thing?"

Well, what would it be to read his book from the poet's side? And what would it be to see a

daisy from God's side? We cannot say; the splendour of the thought blinds us. More wonderful still, what would it be to see a white thought, clothed in a transparent word, and wrought into a loving act, from the side of Infinite Love? We are not nimble-visioned enough to trail these dazzling heights, though their broad, firm bases rest in the rapturous simplicities of daily life. We can only stand and gaze in speechless wonder. Slight as it is, a dear, soulful word throbs with the heartbeat of eternity and sings with the music of the spheres.

III

Our acts, like our thoughts and words, have their good and evil sides. The deeds done in the body must appear in the Great Assize. Conduct is one of the ways whereby men monumentalize themselves. Acts cannot remain hidden; they are surcharged with the power of inevitable manifestation. Our era is familiar with the finger-print system. We know that the print of a thief's finger on a door, a sill, or even on a piece of metal, is sure to betray him. Places touched by the fingers are not visible to the unaided eye, but mercury and chalk bring them out. Then they are photographed, taken to the experts, who have the finger-prints of tens of thousands of criminals filed in their cabinets. The prints are soon duplicated in the vast collection, and then it is a simple matter to establish the identity of the law-breaker. Our deeds are the finger-prints that

manifest our own identity. The poised balances of God cannot swerve. He who "weigheth the spirits" also weighs the deeds of men. The late William James recalled the way in which the drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh offence by saying: "I won't count this time." "Well," said Professor James, "he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among the nerve-cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and works."

Our truth, then, is this: Every time we do a bad deed, it is easier to do another bad deed; every time we do a good deed, it is easier to do another good deed. It is difficult to see how there could be a race of moral beings were it not for this sovereign law. Over against the downward pull stands the upward urge, and it is for us to choose whether we shall plunge to the depths or climb to the heights. Choosing the right, we shall discover that the core at the apple of life is sweet, and we may eagerly bite into its refreshing juices. We shall increasingly find that the good becomes better, and the

better becomes best. It is true that we live in deeds, not years. It is by descending into the valley of the work-a-day that we scale the radiant mountains of the ideal, just as the massive oak that thrusts its top against the sky steadily drives its roots deeper and deeper into the nourishing earth. It is by doing the will of God that we come to know the Person behind that will. We are told to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. It is a great, strong truth, invigorating to the utmost. Adorn the doctrine of God—how? Well, a musician adorns the doctrine of music, not by looking at the sheet alone, but by building the written notes into rhythmic palaces of sound. An artist adorns the doctrine of colour by painting his vision upon the canvas. A philosopher adorns the doctrine of philosophy by wisely interpreting it to his students. Just so you adorn the doctrine of God when it flashes in your eyes, transfigures your face, inspires your speech, quickens your steps upon errands of mercy, rejoices your heart in the doing of fine and lovely deeds. No matter how humble, they cannot be lost. Unknown and unsung here, they shall be well-known and sung by angels there. "For nothing is hid, that shall not be made manifest; nor anything secret, that shall not be known and come to light."

IV

Thought, word, and deed culminate in the candour of character. What we are is simply the harvest of our thinking, speaking, and doing. Therefore, each of us should solemnly avow: "As I am compelled to live on intimate terms with myself for time and eternity, it behooves me to make the best possible self." To do this is the purpose of the Christ. The Christian lives the grandly co-operative life. God helps him, and he helps God. Thus are we saved from a false, artificial, untrue self to a genuine, harmonious, finely articulated personality. "Nature," wrote the late Stopford Brooke, "is humanized, spiritualized by us. We have imprinted ourselves on all things; and this as we realize it, as we give thought and passion to lifeless Nature, makes us understand how great we are, and how much greater we are bound to be. We are the end of Nature but not the end of ourselves. We learn the same truth when among us the few men of genius appear; stars in the darkness. We do not say: 'These stand alone; we never can become as they.' On the contrary, we cry: 'All are to be what they are, and more. They longed for more, and they and we shall have it. All shall be perfected; and then, and not till then, begins the new age and the new life, new progress and new joy.'" Judas went to his own place because he would not have the place Love prepared for him. The terror

of sin is that it gets the upper hand of the soul that deliberately says: "Evil, be thou my good." But evil can never be good—anywhere, anyhow, anywhen—because evil is essentially bad, and its victim cries out at last with Browning's character: "Why have I girt myself with this hell-dress?"

But it is our high task to weave a different suit of soul-clothing. We are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, making no provision for the things of the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. We are to dress our inner selves in whatsoever things are true and lovely and of good report. Looking out the other morning, I saw wondrous things afoot in the gorgeous east. There was a kind of moving picture show exhibiting in the sky. First great films of saffron came out on the hills of dawn and said: "How do you like my colours, Mr. Sleepy Eyes? Are they not fresh enough and glorious, too?" Soon I was standing at the window. Then the saffron slides were quickly shuffled away by unseen hands and great swaths of sapphire came and said: "I'm a magnificent thief; I have stolen the blue of the sea and lifted it up here on the heights of the young morning." Last of all, an immeasurable screen of vermilion drifted across the face of the clouds and said: "Saffron may be golden, sapphire may be ocean-kissed, but vermilion, if you please, is the very latest and in the extreme of fashion." And just then a memorable sight occurred. The great sun himself cleared the horizon and said:

"O man, be not deceived by saffron and sapphire and vermilion. They are just my splendour-tinted children. They are, because I am; I have sent them; it is I myself who give them being." And so a man's thoughts, words, and actions are the children of his own creation. He may stand below the horizon now while his spiritual progeny but half reveal and half conceal his true self. But he is rising with all the force of gravity to the inevitable hour of self-publication. God will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of all hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God. For nothing is hid, that shall not be made manifest; nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light. Wherefore, let us be sons of the morning, walking in the light as He is in the light, and when the shadows are fled and the night is gone, we shall see face to face, know as we are known, and all the hushed voices of the heart will break into full-throated song.

XI

THE SHEPHERD GOD

Psalm xxiii.

BLESSED is the man who writes a worthy national song! The hearts of all true patriots are grateful to him who expresses their love for their native land. But what shall we say of a poet who writes a song uttering the deepest sentiment of all nations? And yet, by universal consent, David accomplished this high service in the Twenty-third Psalm. Variously have men attempted to voice their appreciation of this masterpiece of the soul. But there is in it a quality which subtly eludes the descriptive power of all high and noble words. One has likened it unto a nightingale, because it sings so sweetly in the valley of shadows; another has compared it unto a lark, because it soars so high into the skies of divine love. My own comparison, I think, should be that of a wingèd minstrel, soaring over all seas, flying through all lands, entering all palaces, all hovels, all dungeons; standing beside all graves, all sick bodies, all wounded hearts, all little children, all men and all women of high and low degree—singing—singing to all the happy and sad folk in the

wide, wide world, a song of immortal good cheer and sweet good will. But no matter unto what we liken this fragile 118-word heart-chant, there is ever and always something which refuses to be caught and expressed in words. For the incomparable cannot yield its total self to inadequate comparisons.

I

The first figure under which David thinks of God is that of a Shepherd: "The Lord is my shepherd." How many millions, out of countless generations of young and old, of happy and sad, of healthy and sick, of victor and vanquished, have uttered the words—uttered them out of hearts hushed by a sense of "stilled singing," out of souls made strong by simple trust in the Everlasting Goodness. Evidently this man has thought his way in beneath the foundations of the universe; he has broken through into the heart of being, into the soul of reality, and finds it very good. For what has he discovered in his vast adventure? Just this: All-power and All-tenderness are as wondrously interwoven as the sun and the sunbeam! "Jehovah"—"The Lord"—Omnipotence, that wears the worlds as lightly as a rose wears a dewdrop; Wisdom, that calls the constellations by name and all make answer, "Here we are"; Mind, that knows the career of every sea and every raindrop;

Heart, that keeps the address of every angel and every mortal—this Immeasurable Strength is synonymous with Infinite Tenderness. The boundlessly great is the fathomlessly gentle: "The Lord is my shepherd."

Here, indeed, is the superlative genius of spiritual appropriation. First, it manifests itself in the heart's present tense of vision and insight. "The Lord is"—not the Lord was, or the Lord will be! Half the meaning of religious values is swallowed up in abysmal past tenses and future speculations. Let no man belittle the past or curtain off the future; for the soul that fails to reverence the one and draw hope from the other is a spiritual infant, bound about by religious swaddling bands. Nevertheless, to hark back or leap forward is so strong in human nature, that there is grave peril of overlooking the present, active, guiding, living God. The past is great and sacred, but no past can ever be as great and sacred as the God that is—the loving, righteous Father now abroad on His mission of recovery. The future, also, must be increasingly more splendid and glorious, but no future must be allowed to eclipse the splendour of the God that is—"the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus."

The second way in which the genius of spiritual appropriation asserts itself breaks out, like a

spiritual fountain, in that golden little possessive pronoun, "*My* shepherd." "But is not that rather presumptuous?" inquires an inhabitant of the polar regions of religion. "How could any one dare say that the God of All-wisdom and All-power cares for an infinitesimal me?" After all, that is not a very brilliant question, though skepticism stupidly overworks it, even on the basis of common sense and observation. Look about you these May days. The grass is exceedingly busy. Every blade works from dawn to dark making the earth-carpet a trifle greener; and then every blade sits up all night, threading dewy necklaces that would grace the throat of a queen. And every blade is also a practical philosopher, a disciple of common sense out there in the big June-coming world of nature. For this is what I hear each sprig of green saying: "The sun is *my* sun; yes, the sun is *my* sun." "How dare you be so presumptuous?" I argue with the frail blade. "Why, the sun is sunk ninety-five millions of miles in space; the sun is the centre of the solar system; the sun is so busy looking after planets that he has no time for a sprig of grass." And so, having pronounced such a destructive intellectual broadside, I strut away, convinced that wisdom will die with me and—my ilk! But faintly, sweetly, trustingly, the blade of grass calls: "O, Mr. Wise Man, if the sun has no time for a blade of grass, will you please explain how *I* came to be?" Unable to answer so simple

a question, my anger reaches a white-hot temperature as I still hear the silvery chant: "The sun is *my* sun; yes, the sun is *my* sun." O, no! there is no presumption in a soul feeling what David says: "The Lord is *my* shepherd." There is awe, there is faith, there is wonder, there is love, there is mystery, there is joy unutterable; but no shallow-hearted, thin-souled, atheistic presumption can live in that fine air!

Possessing this genius of spiritual appropriation, what follows? Well, when a man owns the universe is it not reasonable for him to enjoy some of its luxuries, to be partaker of its highest benefits? It would seem so. Because the Shepherd-God delights to be claimed for its very own by each soul, because the everlastingly strong hurries to meet the everlastingly frail, the psalmist strikes the first note in his lyric of repose: "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Both the shepherd and the sheep are instructive here. Does not the efficiently good shepherd lead his flock into lush, green pastures? His ability is manifest in avoiding the dry, desolate tracts. Furthermore, does a shepherd worthy of the name desire anything but the best for his sheep? The great and tender God is like that! He longs for men to have the best. He could not be God were He satisfied for us never to be moved by aching dissatisfactions. That is why, at times, the Great Shepherd leads us far afield. We like to nibble in the beaten paths. We com-

placently assume that nearby weeds are more nourishing than far-off green pastures, difficult of attainment. But God is a Man of War, also, and He greatly makes war upon our smug compromises and low-flying goals. Sounding the command to break unheroic camp, He leads us over moor and fen and desert and torrent into emerald pasture lands of unwithering reality. Once arrived in the Land of Living Green, like all men who have tasted the best, we begin to wonder how we ever endured the second-rate and commonplace, to say nothing of the worst!

Moreover, there is something deeply suggestive in the position of a green-pastured sheep. "He maketh me to *lie* down." The fact is, a hungry sheep is a restless sheep: it may fall into a heap from exhaustion; but as long as an ill-fed sheep is able to move, it will keep on in quest of food. One of the first things, therefore, that the oriental shepherd does is to find satisfying pastures for his flock. After their morning meal they will lie down and rest—not before. Is it not sublimely so of the souls of men and women? Show me a single person enjoying healthy repose, vital spiritual poise, rest calm and deep as a river just because life's tide is flowing full and free, and it is invariably the spirit centred in the Ever-living Heart of God. Nourished upon the Bread of Heaven alone, man is steadied in the midst of life's terrific rush and roar. His downsittings and uprisings are in har-

mony with eternal rhythms. He keeps up with the universe because he constantly dines with God. "For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of Heaven, and giveth life unto the world."

"Lie down!" Yes, it is one of the supreme postures. Good for sheep, it is better still for men. Try it when you go to the country this summer. You never truly see the sky if you do not sometimes lie down and look at it. You never see the miracle of the grass if you do not turn a strip of its velvet greenness into a bed, lie prone, and see it in its brooklike, quivering loveliness. Do not always stand and look at the stars; lie down flat upon your back and let those blazing immensities report a bit of their grandeur to your upturned, enraptured eyes. And if you want a tree to recite all of its poetry of bloom, fragrance, shapeliness, and mystery to you, lie down under it. If a bird—even a vesper-souled thrush—thinks enough of you to regard the tree as a sylvan choir loft, ascends it and sings to you as you wonder, watch, and pray, so much more acceptable shall be your worship and retreat. Whatever you do, be sure to lie down under your favourite tree. Old friends before, I think you will become lovers at once, changing eyes on the spot, to remain lovers until you and the tree go the way of the unreturning. Though the tree may not carry the memory of you back into its native dust, I trust you will carry the memory of that tree up and beyond the dust-heaps of matter into the morn-

ing realms of spirit, where the Tree of Life shall forever stretch its perfumed branches above your enchanted gaze.

But, ah me! if we have to lie down to get peculiar glimpses of physical objects, how much more essential is it to "lie down," now and then, to behold all of God, all of life, we are capable of beholding. How poor the race would be were it robbed of the spiritual viewpoints revealed only to those high souls who have been made to lie down! For it is while lying down that men peel the skin from the body of the physical universe only to see the heart of God, only to vision those plangent, plunging tides of love which flow through the veins of the cosmos of matter and of spirit. "He maketh me"—it is the compulsion of infinite tenderness—"to lie down"—it is Heaven's invitation to new visions of spiritual scenery—"in green pastures"—it is the entrance into watered gardens of unfading reality. "He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

One would like to linger over each of these phrases; but art is brief, time is short, and sermons must not be too long. However, almost every word of the fourth verse is so suggestive as to command a momentary pause. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."

"How does he take the valley?"—that is our question. Why, he walks, being still a courageous pilgrim. He is in no jostling, pushing, bustling hurry. There is still a certain majestic leisureliness in his movement; for the man who spends his life walking with God walks on unaffrighted through the dusky ranks of shadows that would intercept him. Ah! I wonder if the King of Terrors does not forget his terror in sheer admiration of the pilgrim's walk? What if the King should be frightened by the confusing bravery of the subject! "There are many things I have not yet seen," says this tourist from world to world. "Death is one of them. I shall now see the Great Mystery as I walk from life abundant to life more abundant." Nothing spells the man like behaviour under difficulties. Tin-foil heroes may shimmer and shine in the sunlight; but when the sun itself has become a vast shadow, the tin-foiler is at a discount. Yet in the midst of the make-believe's embarrassment the disciple of reality comes to his own. He says: "I will walk 'through'—not over, nor under, nor around, but 'through;' anything capable of being penetrated must have something on the other side of it; so this shadowy something must be a kind of magic door opening into the Heart's Home of Fulfillment. Yes, I will walk 'through.'" Walk through what? "The *valley.*" Believe me, my friends, the valley is not a bad place. The home of my childhood nestles in a valley, with

the hills bastioning it round. Many a time have I heard the thunder chariots roll above the hills; but those hills seemed like great silent sentinels, commanding the storm. "Play about our rugged summits," they seemed to say, "but spare the valley—spare the valley!" And when, betimes, the lightning rips his sword of flame from a black sheath of cloud, some valiant, kingly old oak of the hills rings forth the challenge: "Whet your glittering sword upon my gnarled body, but spare the valley—spare the valley!" Ah! there is heavenly quiet and surpassing rest in the valley, even while the storm is booming through the encircling hills. And I have come to think that the hills called Calvary and Olivet so guard the quiet valley into which we all sooner or later pass, that death hath no storms able to disturb the serenity of a soul held in the gripping love-clasp of the Good Shepherd. Laying down His life for the sheep, he took it again that the sheep might not be unduly frightened as they wind through the shadow-hung valley. The substance being gone, nothing remains there now—only shadow. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us free from the law of sin and death. Therefore, we will fear no evil—not even imaginary evil, in some respects the most terrible of all; for He is with us, both Here and There; His rod and staff comfort us as we pass into and through the enshadowed valley leading to the Lustrous Portals of Home. "Who can tell,"

asked Euripides, "but that which we call life is really death, from which what we call death is an awakening?"

II

The second metaphor under which David thinks of God is that of a Host: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies." But let no one think that the psalmist has in mind an indoors banqueting hall. Far from it! He is still thinking of the enchantingly golden out-of-doors, with no roof but the starry dome, with no walls but the many-tinted horizon, with no floors but the sweet-smelling sod. Table here literally means "something spread out." How, then, does a shepherd of the east prepare a table for his sheep? Here and there ground moles bore holes just under the surface of the soil. Snakes find these holes very convenient hiding places, and crawl into them. Not infrequently they bite the noses of the sheep, when their "table" has not been properly prepared. One way by which the shepherd expels the snakes is burning the fat of hogs along the ground. Going ahead of the sheep, he thus prepares for their coming. Other enemies are the poisonous plants, which the shepherd must destroy. And still other enemies are jackals, hyenas, panthers, and wolves. From hole or cave or hillside these sheep-enemies look ferociously upon the flock in their feeding-

ground. Notwithstanding the shepherd's presence, sometimes they boldly attack before his very eyes and endeavour to make way with the hapless victim.

And the City of Mansoul is besieged by many enemies. Without and within, they gnash their teeth upon us. The snake, the wolf, the jackal, the hyena, the lion, and the bear—ah! how cunningly they disguise themselves in "silver skin laced with golden blood," walk on two feet instead of four, only to prove that the animal is less cruel than the man because less ingenious! And then those subtle enemies within us—those smiling, smirking, insinuating little devils of slander, envy, impurity, and ease—how they whip us away from God's great outspread table of goodness, beauty, holiness, and peace! Yet doth God come out into the open and fight for us. Gethsemane, Calvary, and the Despoiled Tomb—these things were not done in a corner, but out under the wide-open gaze of the worlds. Therefore, let enemies gather from the four quarters of the universe, our Lord goes right on preparing our table in their snarling, howling, hissing presence. Like Dante, in the midst of this our mortal life, we are still met in the way by the Spotted Panther of Worldly Pleasure, "light and swift exceedingly"; by the Lion of Ambition, with uplifted head and ravenous hunger, so that the very air seems afraid of him; by the She-wolf of Avarice, gaunt with all hungerings, and who hath

caused many folk to live forlorn. But no matter! Let the heathen rage, let kings and kaisers imagine vain things, let hell turn itself upside down and empty fumes of the pit upon the green pastures discovered unto men by the Good Shepherd! Yet will we not fear, because the pastures are more vital and vernal than the fumes are poisonous and deadly. He who out of the fire-mist prepared a planet for man to get a start up the Hills of Eternity, is now upon those high hills of life preparing a place for man to work forever on and never grow weary, preparing a home in which man shall live and love forever and a day and still go on forever wondering at love's inexhaustible fulness.

Finally, there are just two more of these bejewelled orientalisms. "He anointeth my head with oil." The shepherd and the sheep are back from the fields, and he is standing at the door of the sheepfold. For it is evening now, and the sheep are being folded for the night. Witness now the rodding of the sheep! As the sheep pass into the fold, the shepherd holds each one back with his rod, inspecting every one. Here is his horn filled with olive oil, and here, also, is his cedar-tar. There comes a sheep with a bleeding head or a bruised knee or a thorn-pricked side. Oh, the soothing touch of the oil and tar! But it seems to me that the exceeding tenderness of the shepherd is pictured in the words: "My cup runneth over." For here comes a sheep that is neither torn nor

bleeding nor bruised. The poor thing is just tired out, exhausted, and panting for water. First of all, the shepherd tenderly bathes the tired sheep's face and head with the invigorating olive-oil. Then, plunging his large two-handled cup into a nearby vessel of water, he brings it up overflowingly full and lets the tired, thirsty sheep drink until it wants no more.

Thus, in the light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Shepherd Psalm is one of the greatest, richest, and simplest interpretations of life and the universe in the possession of the race. David looked into his own heart, heard the music of memory playing there, felt that the Supreme Being who shepherds the worlds through space cannot be less wise and kind than the shepherd who leads forth his flock into green pastures. After looking and hearing and feeling, he sang this song which, if it had power to die, would in the act of death pass into larger life, and go right on singing through the applausive halls of time and eternity. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

XII

THE LARGER EDUCATION

"But go ye and learn what this meaneth."—St. Matt. ix: 13.

WHEN our Lord speaks, the universities of the world may becomingly stop, look, and listen. For, if men are not in His path of truth, they are in peril; if they see not with His sun-glorious vision, they are blind; if they hear not His soulful symphonies of spiritual reality, they are deaf indeed. Now, spiritually speaking, these Pharisees were blind enough and deaf enough. What a pity that they were not dumb enough! Yet the secret of religious deafness and blindness is its monumental loquacity. Usually, men are diffident in expressing opinions on subjects with which they are unfamiliar. Is it not so of the wise doctor, lawyer, scientist? In chemistry, men listen to Levoisier; in astronomy, to Herschel; in pottery, to Wedgewood; in poetry, to Shakespeare; in philosophy, to Plato; in music, to Beethoven. Each science, each branch of learning, has its recognized authority.

But in the imperial subject of religion, every man has his fling. Pathetic and foolish as it often is, the situation is at least suggestive. It asserts, in

the first place, that man is "incurably religious." Aristotle called man a political animal; but it were far truer to say that man is a religious being. And this, I take it, is why men who are loath to express opinions upon subjects they know nothing about, are quite willing to speak freely and foolishly upon the synthetic interest of our lives—*religion.*

But the second and deeper thing of this propensity to discuss religion comes very close to the innermost secret of Christianity. Being constitutionally religious, Christ proposes to make every man an authority on His religion. Not, mark you, an authority on theories, or ethics, or philosophies *about* His religion—interesting and worthful as they undoubtedly are—but upon the thing itself; upon the vital, pulsing, quivering reality, which beats its music out in manifold expressions, yet rests its throbbing activities down upon the central, basic, elemental life of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Can you imagine a finer, vaster, more glorious, more satisfying freedom than that? Freed by Christ's truth, man's soul transmutes the flames of hell into perfume. Knowing Christ's truth, and the consciousness of ultimate reality He gives, man has the freedom of the universe. All goodness, all beauty, all hope, all love, all high and sweet societies, all time, all space, all worlds are his, though the ages to come may be necessary to bring their complete realization.

"I spoke as I saw.
I report, as man may, of God's work—all's Love, yet all's Law.
Now I lay down the judgeship he sent me. Each faculty tasked,
To perceive Him, has gained an abyss where a dewdrop was asked."

And is it not always so? We ask for a dewdrop; He gives an abyss of wonder and beauty. We ask for a ray of hope; into life's sky He flashes Love's unfading rainbow. We ask for dear human friendships; He gives the society of angels, of the noble living and the noble dead—yea, the very life of God Himself.

Thus, because the Pharisees carped when the Son of God proved Himself the true Son of Man in mingling with publicans and sinners, He said: "Your education in the great things is inadequate. I am not after the whole, but the sick. You have not learned the *a b c* of the larger education. God desires mercy, not sacrifice. I came not to call the righeous, but sinners. But go ye and learn what this meaneth."

Our subject, then, is "The Larger Education"—our School-house, our Teacher, our Diploma.

I

The first factor in the larger education is this world in which we live and love and work and weep and laugh and die. For in no mere figurative sense

the world is our school-house. Nothing short of this vast, mystic, wondrous world justifies the institutions of learning throughout our own land, throughout all lands. The little red school-house on the hillside, the log cabin at the country cross-roads, the pile of buildings emphasizing the importance of the modern college and university, the dream of a Brooklyn University which is to come true, and gloriously true—all exist for the purpose of showing students how to find their way, physically, mentally, socially, and morally, about this great school-house named the world.

Emerson had this truth in mind when he said: "He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man." Ah! the world is packed with enchantments, and education is the magician whose golden hammer breaks down the four walls of the class room, sending the scholar forth to behold the limitless horizons of the world, and all that is within them. Education naturalizes us as citizens of the universe. Shame on the man who is so local as to be purely national or international, when God wants him to be universal! As the mystic expressed it: "The universe, vast and deep and broad and high, is a handful of dust which God enchants." Ours is an enchanted universe, and oh, what unspeakable splendours lie hidden within this handful of dust!

Let me use an illustration with which the twentieth century student is familar. Standing here in this teeming world, the imagination flashes back to the time when our globe was a fiery mass of nebulous matter. The next stage "consists of countless myriads of similar atoms, roughly outlined in a ragged cloud-ball, glowing with heat, and rotating in space with inconceivable velocity." Then we behold the transformation of this cloud-mass into a solid earth. But how? Well, the Divine Artificer, through mutual attraction and chemical affinity, caused two of the myriads of atoms to fall in love with each other. And sober science assures us that with that atomic romance—the very moment those two atoms were married—the victory of our earth's evolution was won. As you see, all the human romances through all the human years, owe their origin to that first pair of romantic atoms, indissolubly joined in wedlock by the priestly hand of Infinite Love and All-Wise Intelligence!

If the cornerstone of our school-house was laid in that far-off dawn of time, evidently Someone has been at considerable patience and pains to equip our Alma Mater. But the simple truth is, we never could have known the varied magnificence of our school-house, had not the Angel of Education come and said: "Follow me, and I will show you the grandeurs of your world-home." The furniture was all here, but no man to admire it, no woman to adorn it. Stars sparkled in the blue roof above;

flowers bloomed in the green carpet below; fires burned in the deep craters within; oceans washed the untrodden shores around. But there were no human eyes which—

> " . . . Overleapt the horizon's edge,
> Searched with Apollo's privilege;
> Through man and woman and sea and star,
> Saw the dance of nature forward far;
> Through worlds, and races, and terms, and times,
> Saw musical order and pairing rhymes."

No: there was no seeing eye, no trained human brain to appreciate all this. For millions of years, the stars waited for a man to say: " I shall outlast thy brilliance." For millions of years, the animal creation waited for a man to declare: " I am thy lord." For millions of years, the physical forces waited for a man to proclaim: " I am thy master." Why, the gulf between the untutored Fiji Islander and the cultured Heights' citizen is bridged by education. Does not the savage have all the materials of astronomy, law, literature, medicine, religion, electricity, aëroplanes, automobiles? Having the materials, what does he lack? Why, the mental power which organizes them into the arts and sciences of civilization.

Properly speaking, our school-house—the great world—is just a delicious intellectual feast, and education is the acquired taste for enjoying it. It was Ruskin's deliberate conclusion " that the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is

to *see* something, and tell what it *saw* in a plain way." In other words, our school-house is waiting for eyes to look in upon and appropriate its beauties. An American woman was leaving an art gallery in Florence. As she took nothing in, of course she brought nothing out. Still, she ventured to ask the venerable caretaker: "Are these *all* the pictures you have to show?" His soul soaked in beauty for fifty years, the indignant old picture-lover replied: "Madam, these paintings are not on trial. It is the *visitors* who are on trial."

And each one of us is greatly on trial as we go up and down our world-school-house. Why, if we had eyes to see, we should agree with Whitman that "a mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels." Or is it just because of its eery miraculousness that some of us are so heartily afraid of the little creature? If we had eyes to see, we should confound the real estate dealer by saying: "The land is yours, the landscape is mine." If we had eyes to see, we should talk less of Italian sunsets, and be often enraptured by those which hang over New York Bay. For it is forever true that "though we travel the world over in search of the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not."

One night my boy asked me how much gold there was away up in the golden stars. Trying to make make him understand, I said: "Put your shoe

down in the dirt." After the child had done as I told him, I continued: "Now lift your shoe, look at it, and you will see the very stuff out of which the stars, those golden holes bored in the floor of heaven, are made, my boy." Ah, yes! the dirt in our backyards is every whit as golden as that which glows in the spaces. The dust the vacuum cleaner extracts from our carpets is the very same out of which rainbows are wrought and cloud-palaces are built. A thing of beauty is indeed a joy forever, and the fallacy of the ages is to think that it requires distance to lend it enchantment. The soul that finds no loveliness in this world would gawk blind as a bat through streets of shining gold, though harpers harping with their harps serenaded him every step of the way. John sinks his diamond drill of truth into awful deeps when he says: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen." As the far-away lover is a delusion, a snare, a myth, a fog-bank, so the soul that discovers no strip of beauty, no stretch of loveliness, no glint and no gleam in the world's dusty everydayness, is being ingloriously defrauded of one of the highest and holiest privileges of life. And the great Master and Lord of all is still saying: "Go ye and learn what this meaneth—that the world is full of wonder, full of love, full of beauty: here a bird that wings and sings, yonder a star that shines and wheels; here a lily that holds the kisses of dew-

drops in its unsoiled whiteness, yonder the sun that shines upon the evil and the good. Be clean-hearted, clean-handed, and clean-tongued, and you shall see God." Oh, believe me, my friends, our school-house—

> "The rounded world is fair to see,
> Nine times folded in mystery;
> Though baffled seers cannot impart
> The secret of its labouring heart,
> Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
> And all is clear from east to west.
> Spirit that lurks each form within
> Beckons to spirit of its kin;
> Self-kindled every atom glows,
> And hints the future which it owes."

II

With much interest and pleasure, we witness the transfer of paintings of the old masters from the old world to the new. The older civilizations have much to teach the Republic in many things—(and there is no more thrilling spectacle going on before our eyes today than the eagerness with which all the nations are learning from each other)—but especially in art. We have been so busy tunnelling mountains, channelling rivers into desert places, threading the continent with a patch-work of steel rails, and throwing sky-scrapers at the stars, that we have not realized the national artistic development which is yet to be ours. While we are going by thousands every year to visit the

older civilizations, they are not so unneighbourly as not to return the call, and our good American gold is bringing over some pictures which will return thither no more forever.

Still, Mr. Morgan's paintings are not the only gift the old world is making us. A great picture is great, but a great man is greater. A masterpiece is the conception of a genius dressed up in glowing colours; but God's masterpiece is a flesh-and-blood man—of thought, vision, and character vitally compact. And that is why we should heartily rejoice when Europe sends us her great men and her great books. "Amid all that is problematic," says one of these philosophers, "this at least is certain: Our life is no empty surface-dallying. Something momentously significant is going forward in it, a movement with which we ourselves have much to do, the direction of which we are quite well able to gauge."

So, Life—this strange, wonderful, many-coloured, many-toned something named Human Life—is our Teacher. Sometimes the teacher's face is severe, sometimes it kindles with holy rapture, sometimes it is clothed with a sphinxlike silence. "To me the ways of life are past finding out," a great man recently wrote me. And yet, as Professor Royce reminds us, it is only under the guidance of this unfailing teacher that we commence to "look for the whole of ourselves." Man's supreme find is himself; for in finding his true self,

he must find the God who made him. Then do we feel, with Fra Lippo Lippi:

> "This world is no blot for us,
> Nor blank; it means intensely and means good;
> To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

And to find life's meaning, we must be grandly true to life. In one of his penetrating moods, Henry Mills Alden wrote: "Love never denied Death, and Death will not deny Love." And I want to add: Life, which is the ancestor of both Love and Death, will never deny either, so long as they are loyal to Life; and they both belong to Life, too, because all things are ours, and we are Christ's, and He is the Lord of Life! Is not our teacher, Life, constantly reminding us that, though it is a great thing to go through college, it is a greater thing to have college go through us? And this is only possible as we traverse the winding vistas of life itself, which offers a generous sphere for exercising all the talents we faithfully add to those of native endowment.

Are we following our Teacher? Are we mastering the lessons He assigns? If so, we shall attain unto the wisdom of the wise, we shall ascend the holy hill where dwell the nobly great. For "he that hearkeneth to the reproof of life, shall abide among the wise." Are we not in danger of over-emphasizing the complexity of life in our time? We are seriously tempted to allow the tor-

nado of buzz and bustle to blow us up against the edge of reality only, instead of invading its inmost heart. We need to remember that, in all times, the true and lofty souls have ever found a sweet simplicity nestling within the deepest heart of complexity. And our Concord seer is still calling to us from under his noble trees: "To the poet, to the philosopher, to the saint, all things are friendly and sacred, all events profitable, all days holy, all men divine. For the eye is fastened on the life, and slights the circumstance. Every chemical substance, every plant, every animal in its growth, teaches the unity of cause, the variety of appearance. . . . Nature is an endless combination and repetition of a very few laws. She hums the old well-known air through innumerable variations." Is it not for us, therefore, to listen to the tunes, the variations, Life is ever playing—the undertones as well as the overtones, the minors as well as the majors? Mendelssohn once wrote to his sister: "I never see an ocean or a mountain, a bird or a human, that it does not cry to me: 'Turn me into music; play me on the organ.'" And is not our teacher, Life, calling unto us to do the same? Arnold of Rugby confessed: "If ever I could receive a new boy from his father without emotion, I should think it was high time to be off." So should we stand related to the precious gifts of Life. Then shall our days and years be blended into spiritual tapestries, into Christian symphonies. Asked how long

it took him to paint a certain picture, Sir Joshua Reynolds answered: "All my life, sir." In his old age, a woman inquired of Alexandre Dumas how he had grown old so gracefully. "By giving my entire time to it, Madam!" was the sententious reply.

III

But if the world is our school-house and life our teacher, character is our diploma. In its deeper implications, character is what Lotze calls "the capacity of becoming conscious of the infinite." Laurence Oliphant means character when he says: "Moral truth cannot be discovered by a bad man." Brierley is thinking of character when he writes: "We require a certain inner height to discern life's greatest secret." Bunsen was speaking of character when he said: "Gladstone is the first man in England as to intellectual power, and he has heard higher tones than anyone else in the land." The American philosopher is praising character when he says: "The sweetest music is not in the oratorio, but in the human voice when it speaks from its instant life tones of tenderness, truth, or courage." According to Rothe, the universe exists for the development of spiritual personality, by the conflict of free will with circumstances, in all worlds. Whether the German's generalization be right or wrong, we do know that the soul that has in its inmost deep the shine of Christ-begotten illu-

minations is unafraid of cosmic weathers. In some sections of sunny Italy it is customary for a bride to make what is known as her fragrant pillow. Into this silken bag she puts the sweetest flowers. Year by year, as time flows on, she adds to them. And when, soon or late, she lies in her coffin, this fragrant pillow, wrought of flowers gathered through the bright and stormful years, is placed under her quiet head. And what is character—the soul's diploma—but life's perfumed pillow? More ethereal than ether, more elusive than odour, yet character is more powerful than radium, more pervasive than oxygen, more durable than the stars!

Going about our school-house and learning the lessons of our teacher, we shall daily receive holy compensations, heavenly enrichments, beautiful surprises. Alice Freeman Palmer one day told a friend how her husband, Professor George H. Palmer, surprised her, on their wedding anniversary, with a "great shining opal ring, set round with diamonds." One evening, four months before, they were strolling along a street in Paris. Coming to a jeweller's fascinating windows, they discovered this opal ring, with its tints of green and gold, richer and deeper than they had ever seen before. Mrs. Palmer said: "We looked at it with delight and often afterwards searched for it, but could never find it again. Fancy how my breath was taken away, when just now that identical ring was put on my finger! That base deceiver had helped

me look for it many a time after it was safely hidden in his pocket. And now here it is, with the splendour of the sun at its heart, and changing into fresh beauty whenever I look at it. That, dear friend, is like married life, isn't it? All things made new every morning and evening."

Is not this the spirit of the larger education—finding a mystic newness in our humanity and the wonder-teeming world day by day? All things are constantly made new to the life that homes in the Divine Goodness. For Christ gladly lends His eyes to souls having faith enough to borrow them. Then do men see life and destiny from His viewpoint. He alone imparts that spiritual wide-awakeness, that soulful alertness which grows the healthy, rich-toned, forward-looking human. And, my friends, if we are true, our teacher, Life, will ever bring noble surprises, the fine stuff of Christlike character to us—great flashing opals of the spirit—if we follow with listening, obedient souls to the fair tablelands whither He guides. Abiding upon those majestic heights, we shall realize, with Channing, that life is a gift which acquires greater value every day. In accordance with Christ's voice, we shall learn that mercy is greater than sacrifice, that truth is more wonderful than fiction, that the reality surpasses the dream, that goodness is superior to greatness, and that love will outshine brilliance in the Day of Days.

O, glorious School-house, marvellous Teacher,

unfading Diploma! It is great to dream, greater to do, greatest of all to be, and, therefore, let this be our canticle of character:

"Great are the symbols of being, but that which is symboled is greater;
Vast to create and uphold, but vaster the inward creator.
Back of the sound broods the silence, back of the gift stands the giving;
Back of the hands that receive thrill the sensitive nerves of receiving.

Space is as nothing to spirit, the deed is outdone by the doing;
The heart of the wooer is warm, but warmer the heart of the wooing;
And up from the pits where these shiver, and up from the heights where those shine,
Twin voices and shadows swim starward, and the essence of life is divine."

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